

TWO FOR THE MONEY

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EXT. HOME MOVIE - 1982 - DAY

A DAD tosses a baseball to his SON. The boy swings,
connects,
sends the ball flying. DAD smiles.

BRANDON LANG'S VOICE

That's me. Five years old. I remember that day.
Believe it
or not, I remember that hit. I remember it because of
the smile
that spread over my dad's face...

EXT. HOME MOVIE - 1983 - DAY

BRANDON shooting hoops. DAD drinks a Bud, frowns as he
misses.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

I would've stood there all day to sink one. Just to
see that
smile...

EXT. HOME MOVIE - 1984 - DAY

BRANDON runs, wears a too-big helmet and pads. A DOG
chases
him as DAD throws a football -- long pass -- TIME SLOWS
and --

BRANDON VOICEOVER

purity,
least temporarily
trophies
make

To pop, sports were a religion. To me, it was about
a place where all wrongs could be made right, or at
forgotten. I was going to fill the whole house with
for him. There was no doubt in my mind, I was going to
him happy...

CHEERING and
--

BRANDON catches the ball. Blinding light, loud

EXT. STADIUM - 1999 - NIGHT

night game.
the fourth
SOUTH WEST
QUARTERBACK
runs back
B. LANG.
BRANDON'S

Our eyes adjust to see we're in a STADIUM. It's a
Stands packed. A PLAY CLOCK fills the SCREEN. It's
quarter. Seven seconds left. Score: CAL WEST 31 /
NEVADA UNIVERSITY 27. A bruised and battered UNLV
gets a play from the COACH, straps on his helmet as he
to the huddle. The name on the QUARTERBACK'S jersey --
10 exhausted, desperate faces come close, hang on
every word --

BRANDON

Scottie.
So relax.
after we win
to hear
of it
me. See

Last play. Slant red, right back on two. On two,
It's a lock. A guaranteed TD. I've already seen it.
There's nothing to worry about 'cept one thing --
and they're shoving cameras in your faces, I don't want
any "Hi moms." Guys, it's overdone, the fans are tired
and if you have to thank some one you can just thank
you in the end zone.

The teams breaks, approaches the line. Loud CROWD
roar.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

high school I'd been a quarterback since pee-wee football. Set
joy, it records. Won state championships. I wasn't driven by
fear of wasn't winning as much as terror, pure and simple --
losing.

TV ANNOUNCERS

South West Nevada needs a score. Seven seconds on the
clock.

22 yard line. Win or lose, this has been a
spectacular season for Lang. The big question, should he turn pro now or
wait until -- Lang's got the snap--

BRANDON drops back. A GIANT gets a hand on BRANDON'S
jersey.

BRANDON pulls free, runs. OPPONENTS charge his way,
vaults, sails in the end zone, SCORES. BRANDON rolls
on his back as an OPPOSING PLAYER hurtles in -- mid-air --
unable to stop as -- 300-plus pounds come crashing onto BRANDON'S
leg.

Sickening sound. BRANDON clutches his strangely
angled limb.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

... My first thought was I can tape it and play next
week. Then I puked.

TEAMMATES surround BRANDON, many turning from the sight
and --

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

BRANDON'S wheeled in.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

SURGEONS regard the leg. IVs are hooked up.

BRANDON

What's the rehab time?

The SURGEONS talk between themselves, impressed by the
break.

BRANDON

When do I play again?

One DOCTOR examines his x-rays. BRANDON grabs his
smock.

BRANDON

The patient's got a question!

Anesthetic haze. A wavy world is melting far, far
away.

SURGEON VOICEOVER

Football's done, son...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

BRANDON'S in a hospital bed. Big leg cast. IV's in
each arm.

MAN'S VOICE

Brandon... Brandon, it's me.

BRANDON opens his eyes, focuses on his FATHER (older,
cheap suit,
beard stubble, clutching a \$2 bouquet of flowers).

BRANDON'S DAD

You okay? I saw what happened on the tv. Helluva
thing that
happening like that.

BRANDON

(edge)

What are you doing here?

BRANDON'S DAD

I brought some flowers. From downstairs in the shop.

BRANDON

(pressing the nurse's call button)

No, you gotta go -- where's the nurse?

BRANDON'S DAD

I'm thinking of getting into a new program, Brandon.

A NURSE comes fast through the door, watches unsure --

BRANDON

Could you get him out, please?

BRANDON'S DAD

It's okay, we're fine, I'm his father.

BRANDON

Just get out!

takes his
BRANDON tries to rise, IV'S coming loose. The NURSE
DAD'S arm, leads him out to the hall.

BRANDON'S DAD

(pulling away, straightening)

Boy's
He didn't recognize me. Must be all the drugs and all.
been through a lot.

(handing the NURSE the flowers)

his room.
If you could put these in some water and leave 'em in
Before they die.

and --
BRANDON'S DAD nods thanks, departs down the corridor

EXT. TRACT HOME - DAY

COACH
WOMAN and
greet him.
Vegas desert. It's raining. A SWNU car pulls up. The
helps BRANDON out, on crutches now. A middle-aged
a TEENAGE BOY stand under a rusty awning, waiting to

BRANDON VOICEOVER

or maybe
after getting
matter what,
It doesn't rain much in the desert. Maybe it was that,
the look on my mother's face, or how fast coach left
me up the steps, but I swore then and there -- no
I'd get back -- I would play again...

INT. UNLV WEIGHT ROOM - 1997 - DAY

BRANDON
limps in on a cane. Back slaps. ("B's back!" "The
man!")
Off-season. The room's packed. Loud hip hop plays.

OMIT

EXT. SOUTH WEST NEVADA UNIVERSITY TRACK - DAY

have
bounds
possessed.
Sprinters dart by. Here comes BRANDON. Several months
passed. Big ass brace on his leg. A GIRL'S TRACK TEAM
past like a herd of gazelles. BRANDON presses on,

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

the sideline,
flanked by the COACH and TEAM DOCTOR.
The TEAM'S practicing for a new season. BRANDON'S on

BRANDON VOICEOVER

and it'd
get drafted.
Doc told me it would take years to heal. One bad hit
be over. But the team needed me and I had to play to

I figured I'd take a chance...

stands and--
BRANDON looks at the field, the PLAYERS, the empty

EXT. SOUTH WEST NEVADA UNIVERSITY STADIUM - 1997 - DAY

on the CROWDED arena. Electrifying scene. BRANDON'S suited
sidelines. Kick-off. A SWNU PLAYER returns the ball.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

There Every minute of recovery I'd dreamt about this moment.
next. were NFL scouts in the stands. I knew what happened

BRANDON leads his team onto the field. Into the huddle

--

BRANDON

Let's ease back into it with our bread
and butter -- TD first play. We're going
deep. Split right. Deep two on three!

(coming up to the line)

Red 38! Red 28! Set! Set--

when one BRANDON drops back. Blitz. Brandon about to throw
off balance. of his own LINEMEN is knocked into him and -- BRANDON'S
moment... Too much pressure on that leg and in one horrible

it buckles. BRANDON falls. The play whistled dead.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

gritty smile ...It was over. I could've gone out with class, a
instead I opted and a little wave to the crowd from a stretcher,
to go psycho on national tv.

grabs his The PLAYER who hit him leans down to help. BRANDON
steps in and face mask, starts punching. Pure rage. A REFEREE
yank BRANDON slugs him, slams his face in the turf. LINEMEN
BRANDON off as the bloody REF struggles to get free and

--

TV SCREEN -- jim rome sports show

BRANDON seen
away --
A highlight reel plays a tape of the incident --
struggling with PLAYERS as the roughed-up REF crawls

JIM ROME

idiot?!

ultimate
muscle
life-time
deserves
Welcome to the jungle! Hey clones, do you believe this
That cannot happen! This is college football, not the
fighting championship! What we have here is too much
and not enough brain mass -- this is why we need a
ban! Make an example out of him! Because the sport
better than this! Talk to me!

CAMERA PUSHES IN -- ECU on the TV as we hear --

BRANDON VOICEOVER

editorials. Overnight
of school.
included counseling.
It made all the highlight films. People wrote
I became the poster boy for the "Dark Side of Sports."
The college yanked my scholarship and I was kicked out
The ref piled on, pressed charges. My probation

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

corner.
A PSYCHIATRIST faces BRANDON. A clock ticks in the

PSYCHIATRIST

Who did the referee represent, Brandon?

BRANDON

He represented the nearest guy I could grab.

PSYCHIATRIST

... Let's try again.

INT. WINDOWLESS OFFICE - PRESENT DAY - DAY

Passing over
EMPLOYEES
lines,
CAMERA moves ceiling level above a dreary space.
cramped cubicles. Murmur of voices from each one.
seen, all reading phone copy into taping devices. Sex
astrology and get-rich-quick schemes are heard.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

couldn't play
much, I
Football wasn't a sport, it was my life. Maybe I
anymore but I couldn't leave. So I went with it,
rode it out. Then one day, and it didn't
take long, I woke up at the bottom, and I liked it so
stayed for six years.

sits
tossing
device.
THE CAMERA stops above BRANDON. Older. Scruffier. He
in his cubicle under a flickering fluorescent light,
a weathered football as he reads copy into a recording

BRANDON

Jessica's going
and her
little
Jessica's
--You've reached the Jessica Simpson hot line!
to tell you all about Nick's surprise birthday party
rockin' new panty line at Wal-Mart, but first, here's a
fan trivia to win a VIP Gold Package back stage pass to
Omnicon Hotels Summer Tour--

A bull-like BOSS appears at BRANDON'S cubicle entry --

BOSS

Got a job for you, Lang.

BRANDON

I'm in the middle of taping.

BOSS

anything
Bauer's sick, can't update his betting line. You know

'bout sports?

BRANDON

... Yeah, a little.

INT. NEIGHBORING CUBICLE - OFFICE - MINUTE LATER

BRANDON enters a co-worker's cluttered cubicle.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

900 numbers, audio text, the racket had a lot of names.

text copy
Brandon sits at his co-worker's desk. He picks up the
sitting beside the recording device, looks it over --

BRANDON VOICEOVER

winners for
picks.
This guy's gig was sports handicapping. Predicting
people who bet. I was supposed to just record his

The thing was, I didn't agree with them.

copy.
Brandon starts changing game selections, re-writing the

BRANDON VOICEOVER

season, the
job was mine...

INT. BRANDON'S NEW CUBICLE - SEVERAL MONTHS LATER - DAY

cubicle.
A football is seen, rising and falling from BRANDON'S

He tosses the football as he records a new update --

BRANDON

division
minus the
the year
--Kansas City is 7-1 against the point spread versus
opponents coming off a Monday night game. Take K.C.
six points. Call tomorrow for my pro football game of

-- Tampa Bay versus Oakland. That's 900-656-3100.
This is Brandon
Lang saying good night and good luck everybody.
BRANDON pops the tape. Dons an old UNLV windbreaker.
He shoulders
a beat-up bike, walks up front, hands the tape to his
BOSS.
BOSS hands back a paycheck. Regarding the amount --

BRANDON

I went 9-2 in pro football Sunday and hit my third
straight Monday
night parlay.

BOSS

That's what you get paid for.

BRANDON

I want a raise to 12 bucks an hour.

BOSS

I don't make 12 an hour.

BRANDON

You're not picking 75 percent.

BOSS

If you're so good then bet your own games, get rich and
send
me a postcard
from the Riviera.

BOSS pops BRANDON'S tape in a multi-line answering
system and--

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DAY

BRANDON rides a beat-up bike through downtown.

INT. CASINO - DAY

SPORTS
BRANDON maneuvers through a bustling casino, enters the
BETTING ROOM. He goes to a rack of printed betting
lines for

SUPERVISOR. the weekend games, pockets a printed sheet, sees a

BRANDON

Hey Stu, where's the action this weekend?

SUPERVISOR/STU

jumping We're getting big money on Tampa/Oakland. Everyone's
on Tampa Bay.

BRANDON

Crazy.

Supervisor/stu

You think?

BRANDON

that Tampa knows knows Brown have him throws on middle of on Sunday.
That game's gonna be won by coaching, Stu. Gruden put
Bay team together before he came to Oakland, right? He
every weakness of that team and every strength. He
only likes to catch over his left shoulder and he'll
double-teamed to the right. He knows Gannon always
a 3-step drop and the linebackers will take away the
the field. Gannon'll be intercepted at least 4 times

(STU staring at him, pained look)

...You got sucked into Tampa, didn't you?

(STU manages a nod)

right, listen, outright. Bet
Stu, how many times do I have to bail you out? All
forget the point spread. Oakland's going to win
the money line and bet big.

STU

Thanks, B.

OMIT

EXT. BRANDON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Metallica
muscle
BRANDON rides up. His younger brother, DENNY (18,
t-shirt) and some FRIENDS work on an old, bondo-pocked
car in the garage.

DENNY

I scrounged some old headers, B! Check it out!
DENNY turns the key. The car rumbles to life. He revs
the bored-out
engine, flashes a shit eating grin.

BRANDON

... Awesome dude. That's a righteous ride, Denny.

INT. BRANDON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

searching
MOM'S readying for work, dressed in croupier attire,
for something as BRANDON enters.

MOM

I'm late. Dinner's in the oven.
Where the hell's my lucky crucifix?
BRANDON reaches to a key rack, hands it to her. She
dons it.

MOM

Tipped me
college.
Thank God. A man won 5600 at my table last night.
out in color. I gave it to Denny, help him with

BRANDON nods, downs a carton of milk. MOM about to go.

MOM

quick. That's
a good sign.
Mail came, letter for you, from Chicago.
You just tried out last week. They got back to you

BRANDON

Wanna bet?

MOM

Open it.

BRANDON opens it. Reads. Words pop out: "Arena Football League"... "We regret to inform you"... "but based on your performance"... "staff declines."

BRANDON

At least they kicked me a cap.

MOM

Shit.

INT. BRANDON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Filled with exercise equipment. BRANDON pins the letter to a wall covered by dozens of rejections -- National Football League -- Canadian Football League -- Arena Football League. BRANDON changes into shorts. And now we see, he's in amazing shape. Could maybe still play pro. But that two foot scar running the length of his leg makes you wonder. As BRANDON pumps it out we realize he still has a dream of coming back, a dream we sense by his intensity is fast slipping away and --

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DAWN

BRANDON pedals to work when his cell phone rings.
Answering:

BRANDON

Hello.

MAN'S VOICE

Brandon!

BRANDON

Yeah?

MAN VOICEOVER

college! Picking
following
Congratulations! You went 9-2 last Sunday! 20-4
77 percent winners since opening weekend! I've been
you! I'm a big fan, Brandon! A big fan.

BRANDON

900 line.
How'd you get this number? If you want picks, call my

MAN VOICEOVER

and work
What I want, Brandon, is for you to come to New York
for me.

BRANDON

Who is this?

MAN VOICEOVER

I run
started the
you're doing
This is Walter Abrams. I don't know if you know me but
the biggest sports service in the country. Hell, I
industry. Ask around. Ask anyone,
even that reprobate boss of yours. It's
my job to keep track of who's doing what and what
should be rewarded.

Allow
massage,
and all
down what
making
here first
and board
Focus, Brandon. Focus. One day you'll
look back, see this was one of life's defining moments.
me to paint a picture for you. Right now I'm getting a
looking out my window at the greatest city in the world
I'm asking you to do is come up with a number. Write
you make now, cross it out and write what you should be
and then toss in how much it'll take to get you to fly
class and come work for me -- did I mention free room

-- and speak up when you've got something to share.

(aside to MASSEUSE)

Right there. Yeah. Deeper. Yes. Fuck that hurts.

BRANDON

Do me a favor and lose my number, I gotta go to work.

BRANDON hangs up and --

INT. BRANDON'S CUBICLE DAY

BRANDON hefts the bike down the hall, reaches his
cubicle to find his phone ringing. Picking up --

BRANDON

Hello.

WALTER VO

It's me again.

BRANDON

This is a joke, right?

WALTER VO

A joke can be the ultimate intellectual pursuit
sometimes. This?

This is just a job offer. In your top drawer there's
an envelope with your name on it.

BRANDON opens the drawer, pulls an envelope and a
ticket.

WALTER VO

That's travel cash and an airline ticket. It's not a
magic trick, Brandon. I paid someone to put it there, who
incidentally

said the place reminded him of a Turkish prison. I
don't have to tell you you're
wasting your time there, Brandon, unless
this is a part time gig -- unless you're

planning some kinda "comeback," in which
case I request you use a fraction of your
talents and weigh the odds of that dream becoming
reality. Two leg fractures? Passed on by every conceivable team in
the league? Any chump can make that call, and anyone who clears
the boards the way you do week in and week out should live in a
penthouse on Park Avenue -- which is not for you to construe I'm
offering that to start, but keep these stats up working for me
and I'll have you in one in less than a year. Unless of course
you're a village kind of guy...

BRANDON glances at the old faded football in his back
pack.

WALTER VO

Run the numbers, do the math. Hold on a sec--
Muzak. BRANDON juggles the phone, searching, finds a
pay stub. Amount: \$275.00 a week. BRANDON crosses it out,
writes \$1000. He crosses that out, writes \$1500. BRANDON pulls a
quarter, flips it. The coin bounces, spins, falls and--

EXT. JFK MOVING WALKWAY - DAY

BRANDON hefts a duffel bag -- sees an ASIAN DRIVER,
chauffeur uniform, mirrored shades, holding a sign reading B.
LANG and
--

INT. MOVING LIMO - DAY

BRANDON eyes a basket of croissants and juice, grabs a
danish,

takes a bite, sees the DRIVER watching in the mirror.

BRANDON

I'm gonna pay. I'll pay you--

DRIVER

--Pay me? Pay Walter. His car. I'm Milton, I drive
for him.

BRANDON

I thought it was a service.

(moving to the jump seat, seeing MILTON is driving very
fast)

So what's the deal with this guy? You work for him a
long time?

MILTON

Oh yeah, going on two weeks.

(off BRANDON'S look)

I was bike messenger. Walter's driver hit me with his
car.
I lie on ground, make it look worse than is, big car,
you

know maybe get some money. Driver call me name, I call
him name,
he take swing -- big son of a bitch -- so I kick his
ass.

(slicing the air with his hands)

Walter get out. I say his driver can't drive, he say
you're
right. I say damn right. He ask if I can, I say hell
yeah.

He take hat off driver, give it to me.

Every day with Walter is...

EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS BROWNSTONE - DAY

Five stories. Next to the Brooklyn Bridge. Manhattan
rises

steps out, across the East River. The limo pulls up. BRANDON
regards the structure. Exhaust fans dot the second
floor. Satellite dishes on the roof. Security cameras everywhere.

INT. BROWNSTONE - TOP FLOOR - DAY

BRANDON follows MILTON through a large, wildly
furnished apartment.
They pass an large library dominated by rows of
bleacher seats from the old Polo Grounds. A hot dog stand sits
outside a wine cellar. Toys tell us there's a child in the house. A
cha-cha plays from a stereo. MILTON stops at a set of doors.
About to knock when --

WALTER VO

Bring him in!

INT. WALTER ABRAMS' OFFICE - DAY

ASSISTANT WALTER smokes a cigarette, talking on the phone as an
phones. in a separate, adjoining space handles four ringing
turned Across the room, a large wall is filled with TVS, each
to a different channel, no sound.

WALTER

I'll hire the trainers too... Well run it by them, you
won't know until you try... So, they can stay the night.
I'll put 'em up at the Plaza, nice suite, park view... Okay
double it... Triple it... Everything's about money. Look, on
Sunday, my daughter, an angel, turns six, it's not likely to happen again.
She loves elephants. Your circus has 10,

hands. I only want one, my little girl's happiness is in your

(beat, icy edge)

wheels I don't need parenting advice from a guy
who doubles as a clown. I want an
elephant and I'll pay. What'll it take to grease your
and get one this weekend? Hello?... Hello?" Fuck wad!

(intercom his ASSISTANT, furious)

someone who Find Ringling Brothers! Get me on the horn with
understands profit!

removes WALTER sees BRANDON. Something new. Full focus. He
the headset. Dons his glasses. Circles around.

WALTER

Whoa, look at you. The Marlboro man.

(feeling his bicep)

Jesus you're in great shape.

BRANDON

I've been in better.

WALTER

(assessing BRANDON as he speaks--)

There Modesty's not a virtue, it's a vice, as evil as vanity.
are rules to

what you success, Brandon, and this is rule number one, know
everything know and know what you don't know and know I gotta know
you know as soon as you know it, if not sooner! Smile.
C'mon!

Hungrier. More What the hell is that? I said smile. Bigger.
teeth. Ever sell before?

BRANDON

No.

WALTER

public? If you can sell you'll never starve. Ever speak in
Perform? Anything like that?

BRANDON

I played quarterback in college. Division one.

WALTER

I know, I'm talking about not in uniform.

BRANDON

I used to sing at church.

WALTER

Oh really? So you're religious?

BRANDON

I don't know. I guess.

WALTER

it? Certain things, you either are or you aren't. Which is

BRANDON

obviously When I was a kid I thought I wanted to be a pastor...
not now. I mean, yeah, I believe in God.

WALTER

to hire Relax. What do I care? Besides, it's against the law
republican are based on religious orientation. You're not a
you? Just kidding.

(silent beat, staring at him)

headlights You're scaring me son. What's with the deer-caught-in-
leader. vibe? You were a quarterback for God's sake. A

BRANDON

That was six years ago.

WALTER

university.

word, huh?

reading, sure,

stupid

myself 30 years

resemblance

C'mon, you won three conference titles at a major

You think I went to college? I'm autodidactic. Big

Know what it means? Self-taught. Partially by

but mostly by keeping my eyes open and asking a lot of

fucking questions. I swear to God I'm looking at

ago. A taller, more athletic version maybe, but the

is remarkable.

WALTER crushes out the cigarette, sprays air freshener.

WALTER

It's

anything other

I'm not supposed to smoke any more, among other things.

bad for my condition. So before I die, did you do

than the sports phone in Vegas?

BRANDON

mean we got

Just the 900 number recordings, it was full time, I

10 bucks a call.

WALTER

here.

can't

year-business.

morning, after

Chump change, Brandon. We're angling for bigger fish

You see, the networks don't talk about it and Uncle Sam

tax it, but sports gambling is a 200-billion-dollar-a-

These gamblers have needs, Brandon. Come Monday

a losing weekend, a lot of them have big needs.

games.

WALTER presses a button and the TVs fill with football

WALTER

the week?

climb

Sports

That's every pro game played last Sunday.

Do you know why Monday Night's the most watched game of

It's because Monday's the last chance bettors have to

out of the hole before paying their bookies on Tuesday.

what
broker,
to bet.
when a
they
we get
friend

betting's illegal in 49 states, including this one, but
we do is 100% legal -- it's exactly the same as a stock
only instead of touting stocks, we advise people on how
We make the big money off our client list. You see,
client wins with our advice we take a percentage, which
gladly give to keep getting our picks. When they lose
zip. So the object here, my tall, athletic, religious
-- is to win.

tv's.
COLLEGE AND
a high-octane

WALTER clicks a control and his face fills the wall of
Phone numbers and messages ("FOOTBALL SELECTIONS!"
PRO!" "BASKETBALL PICKS!") flash on the screens. It's
infomercial for sports gamblers.

TV WALTER

Sports Advisors
five day
am right
conclude
want you

Hello -- this is Walter Abrams and welcome to The
and week three in professional football. After a nice
vacation on my yacht I can't be any more ready than I
now. Studying the mismatches this weekend I can only
they're giving my handicappers a license to steal. I
to take out a blank

Tv walter con'd
you want
making
matches our
company
absolutely
higher

check right now -- go on, do it -- and write in as much
to cash it for on Tuesday, that's how much money we're
for you this weekend. Year in, year out, no stock
return, and for the first time in the history of the
I'm releasing our three-team college and pro parlays
free! That's right. This is why in a business with a

still going
800-238-6648.
big money
experts--

turnover rate than Leona Helmsley's maid staff we're
strong after 28 years! I'm giving these picks away.
1-800-BET-ON-IT. Absolutely free. We're looking at a
weekend so let's get right into it with our panel of

WALTER

(freeze frames himself, to BRANDON)

My cable show. Tapes Thursday, airs Saturday and
Sunday morning.

Nationwide. Hell I need a new barber. The man should
be shot. Look at my hair in the back.

BRANDON

How'd you afford that yacht if the picks are free?

WALTER

There is no yacht. Good, keep asking question. Next.

BRANDON

You didn't answer about the free picks.

WALTER

I know. What else?

BRANDON

What's on the second floor?

WALTER

That's where we print the money. Any more?

BRANDON

No, that clears up pretty much everything.

WALTER

Great. Welcome aboard. We got some good stuff to work
with.

ASSISTANT/over intercom

Ringling Brothers on one.

WALTER

Ever have a manicure?

BRANDON

Me? No. Why?

WALTER

Because you need one. Besides, there's a girl you gotta meet.

BRANDON

Really? What's she like?

WALTER

Beautiful, you'll like her--

(answering the phone)

--This Barnum or Bailey?

INT. HIGH-END, BROOKLYN SALON - DAY

TONI MORROW looks into CAMERA, styles an attractive, 30-ish WOMAN'S hair as the WOMAN regards her face in a mirror -- woman

Tighten I'm just thinking of doing some work around the eyes. it up a bit. A lift here, look, see these lines?

TONI

I see a beautiful woman. What are you --all of 35? I have a girlfriend, she was stunning, went in to "tighten it up a bit" and came out with a permanent smile. Even when she cries she looks like she's laughing. Another, she's on her third eye lift. Her skin's so tight, I swear, if you put an egg shell on her butt she'd look like a baby bird.

WOMAN

I'm just thinking of a tune-up.

TONI

Oh yeah, first it's a tune-up, then it's something else, and

a stretched
because
work

one day you'll come teetering in with your new 36Cs and
face and you won't be able to say how unhappy you are
of all the collagen they shot in your lips.
Do yourself a favor. Skip the surgery and get a shrink,
on the inside.

WOMAN

Easy for you to say. You used to model.
The other WOMEN CUSTOMERS listening nearby nod in
agreement.

TONI

Sometimes I
retouched photos

Oh yeah, that's true. Those were the good days.
like to just curl up on the ledge with my box of
and reminisce about rehab.

WOMAN

Tightly wound today, aren't we?

TONI

I guess. Must be the coffee talking.
(handing her a fashion magazine)
Here, read a fashion magazine. Feel more insecure
about yourself.

row of
in among
pedicure.

TONI walks through the shop, checks her watch, passes a
WOMEN getting lunch-hour nail jobs. BRANDON'S squeezed
them. Only guy there. Cotton between his toes post-
Hunched and uncomfortable as the WOMEN around him
discuss boyfriends
and relationships.

TONI

... Brandon?

BRANDON

Hi.

TONI

I'm Toni. Walter said you'd stop by.

BRANDON

Nice to meet you.

(immediately, re: the pedicure)

This was his idea.

TONI

I know.

BRANDON

He makes all his employees do this?

TONI

Every one.

BRANDON

How often?

TONI

Once. Before they start work.

BRANDON

Weird.

TONI

You think?

BRANDON

I've never had my nails done before.

TONI

I can see that.

(putting his hands in water)

Strong hands. Nice. Do you drink?

BRANDON

No thanks. I'm fine.

TONI

No, do you drink?

BRANDON

Excuse me?

TONI

Alcohol. Are you a drinker?

beer

BRANDON

I've been pretty focused on staying in shape. I mean a
once in a while.

TONI

Smoke?

BRANDON

No.

Toni

What about gambling?

BRANDON

What about it?

TONI

Look, I'm sorry, I'm pressed for time.

(stopping work, regarding him)

I asked do you bet. Are you a bettor?

BRANDON

No.

TONI

Really? Why not?

BRANDON meets her gaze. Gears turning. She's hitting
on him.

BRANDON

Toni, huh? Are you here full-time?

TONI

It's my shop, I better be. Why don't you gamble?

BRANDON

Risked everything
Well I'll tell you, Toni. I bet on something once.
I had and lost.

TONI

So?

BRANDON

I swore I'd never do it again.

Toni

You're sticking to that story?

Brandon

relationship
Hey, we just met. I sure wouldn't want to start our
off by lying.

TONI

resolve
Well Walter could definitely use someone with a little
in his life.

BRANDON

(leaning in)

used to
you'd like
Ya know, Toni, this is my first time in town. I'm not
how fast things run around here. I'm wondering if
to have dinner tonight? Let's get
to know each other without so many people around.

TONI

... He didn't tell you.

BRANDON

What?

TONI

Brandon, Walter and I are married.

BRANDON

acted like...
What? Walter just said I was meeting a woman. He

TONI

Walter's got a weird sense of humor.

love working
"anonymous"
very
Walter's
Look, he has a big, bright, beautiful spirit, you'll
for him, but he's held together by meetings. If it has
at the end, Walter goes. He has to. He also has to be
careful who he let's into his life. In most ways,

he sends brilliant -- but he can be bullshitted and I can't. So
'em over to me before he hires 'em.

BRANDON

You're kidding me? Coming here... the manicure... this
was an interview?

TONI

You're swift.

BRANDON

How'd I do?

TONI

Except for an illegal forward pass,
my next perfect, flying colors. Congratulations. I'm late for
appointment.

TONI walks away, glances back, smiles and --

EXT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

BROWNSTONE. CAMERA favors the ground floor windows.

WALTER vo

The apartment on the first floor is yours. You have
satellite tv, a gym, you want to relax there's a jacuzzi tub the
size of a kiddie pool.

INT. BROWNSTONE - FIRST FLOOR - DAY

900 number office. A phone and a computer on an empty
desk.

Two TVs mounted on the wall. WALTER shows BRANDON
around.

WALTER

I'm starting you on the 900 numbers, same gig you did
in Vegas.

a day
Each
dozen hits
down some

You'll make your picks and record them every day, once Monday through Friday and five times a day on weekends. call's worth 25 bucks a shot. Right now we get a few a week. We should be doing triple that. I'm sending test copy. Before you record it, a little advice.

BRANDON sits. Regards the phone --

there, we

WALTER

Your pitch sucks, it doesn't exist. The pieces are just gotta bust you out.

Brandon

How?

Million

WALTER

From now on you have a new name -- John Anthony, "The Dollar Man."

BRANDON

Hold on. What's wrong with Brandon Lang?

selling
a direct
gonna let

WALTER

Brandon Lang is still at home with his mother. You're a lifestyle here, and John's livin' large. John's got line to God and for a measly 25 bucks a call you're the world's losers listen in.

INT. BROWNSTONE - 900 NUMBER OFFICE - NIGHT

record, reads

BRANDON studies the copy. He pops in a CD, hits into a mike --

Apple with
college

BRANDON

Hello sports fans! This is John Anthony in the Big my big money picks! The action starts Saturday with

ball and our first matchup, Michigan against Indiana--

EXT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

The upstairs window flies open and a CD sails out.

WALTER VO

Wrong!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - DAY

WALTER turns from the window, faces BRANDON.

WALTER

What's your sales pitch?

BRANDON

What's my sales pitch? 77 percent's my sales pitch.

WALTER

Stats aren't enough! These are gamblers

afford
rarest

you're talking to, people ready to risk what they can't
for what they can't have! You're selling the world's
commodity.

BRANDON

What's that?

WALTER

Certainty in an uncertain world!

INT. BROWNSTONE - 900 NUMBER OFFICE - NIGHT

BRANDON back at the mike. Groping for a delivery.

BRANDON

dreams come
spread in
game a gimme--

John Anthony here, ready to make all your betting
true! Call now and let me win for you! The point
the Indiana/Michigan game's up to four, making that

INT. BROWNSTONE - WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Another CD sails out. WALTER staring at BRANDON --

WALTER

dead-end
Were
you afraid

What is that shit? You spent 6 years bouncing from one job to another. Riding to work on a frigging bicycle. you making some kind of statement? What the hell were of?

BRANDON

trying

I wasn't afraid of anything. I was working my ass off, to get back in the game.

WALTER

You are back in the game! Convince me you belong here!

INT. BROWNSTONE - DOWNSTAIRS GYM - NIGHT

BRANDON watches
slams
from

BRANDON pumping it out. Music pounds on a stereo. himself in the mirror, muscles straining. He suddenly the bar down, goes down the hall, grabs the mike, reads the copy and --

BRANDON

Tokyo to Hollywood,
consistently's
winners on
and relax
shelling your

This is John Anthony here, and from Wall Street to all your big money stays and plays with me! Winning the name of this game and I always remain the same, a consistent basis, 77 percent winners! So sit back because because it's a scud attack this weekend and I'm bookmaker!

INT. BROWNSTONE - DAY

BRANDON bounding up to WALTER'S office.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

Indiana;
spread as a
Wisconsin on deck
Indiana

Game one of my three-team parlay is Michigan hosting the big boys at Michigan are just 2-7 against the double-digit home favorite and with arch rival next week, Indiana will catch them looking ahead! Take plus the 16 points! It's a lock!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

WALTER listening to the CD. BRANDON watching him.

BRANDON VOICEOVER

make you
don't
it! They'll

You want more? John Anthony's the man with a plan to money! Game two goes to Florida and North Carolina! I care how many points you gotta lay with Florida, lay win by 50!

WALTER pops the CD, heads for the window.

BRANDON

C'mon! First too little, then too much --

WALTER

It's a start.

BRANDON

Tell me what you want.

WALTER

about!

No. What do you want, Brandon? That's what this is

WALTER stops. Steadies himself. He pulls a prescription vial.

Sits. Passing, pained look.

BRANDON

Walter? Are you okay?

WALTER

... Huh?... It's nothing.

(popping a pill from the vial, beat, taking another)

... Small one.

BRANDON

Should I call someone?

WALTER

Not unless they got a spare heart. I'm okay.

WALTER finds a cigarette. Lights it. Savors the first drag.

BRANDON

What are you doing?

WALTER

Courage wants to laugh.

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MORNING

BRANDON riding his bike hard across the Brooklyn Bridge. Wearing earphones while he listens to a radio sports show.

RADIO ANNOUNCER/keith jackson vO

--Talking about college defenses you have to include Oklahoma.

The Okie boys are 2nd-ranked going into this weekend and facing an offensive powerhouse in Oregon.

That game and more coming up after the break.

A commerical's heard as BRANDON pedals away, glances up and --surreal

sight -- Brandon hurtling at an ELEPHANT'S ASS -- he swerves

-- looks back at the TRAINER walking the pachyderm across the city span and --

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - DAY

A TV SCREEN FILLS FRAME. A COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME starts. ANNOUNCERS riff a MEDLEY of analysis and scores.

PULL BACK TO SHOW -- BRANDON comes out of the shower, towel around his waist, putting on a clean shirt. Through a ground floor window the boardwalk can be seen. A child's party is in progress.

The elephant ambles by wearing a birthday hat, the bemused TRAINER walking beside him. TONI and WALTER are seen arm-in-arm with their 6-year-old daughter, JULIA. WALTER crosses the lawn, looks through the window.

BRANDON'S switching between football games blaring from the tv.

A radio blasts scores and updates. WALTER knocks on the window, mouths "How we doing?" BRANDON grabs a betting sheet, writes something, holds it up -- 0 and 9. WALTER scowls.

BRANDON realizes it's upside down, flips it to read -- 6 and 0. WALTER kisses the glass and --

EXT. BROWNSTONE - SAME TIME - DAY

WALTER catches up to TONI, walks through the party with her.

WALTER

He's a machine, all he does is work out and pick winners. Talk about fit. Go take a peek, see him with his shirt off. I did.

He's a serious side of beef.

TONI

Enjoy your daughter's party.

WALTER

Check him out, you know you want to.

TONI

Get out of your head, Walter. It's a bad neighborhood.

TONI kisses him, walks with WALTER through the party

and --

EXT. BROWNSTONE ROOF - DUSK

Satellite dishes aim at the sky. ANNOUNCER CHATTER

continues

OVER, giving non-stop COLLEGE football scores. BRANDON

comes

down the street, carries a bag of take-out.

BRANDON'S POV -- a second floor window opens as someone

blows

cigarette smoke into the night. Activity seen inside

before

the window shuts. BRANDON left staring and --

EXT. PARK SLOPE - NIGHT

BRANDON rides a bike. Wears headphones. Sunday's NFL

scores

coming in now. BRANDON'S reactions indicate he's doing

well.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

WALTER writing on a call sheet -- 375 calls at \$25/85

at \$50!"

The city's seen through WALTER'S office window. NFL

ANNOUNCER

CHATTER subsides as scores filter in. WALTER flipping

through

BRANDON'S betting sheets, smile spreading over his face

and --

INT. N.Y.C. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

a table,
Loud. Crowded. High-end. WALTER, TONI and BRANDON at
ordering dinner.

BRANDON

I'll have the bruketta and the -- this, with the pasta.

WAITER

(takes the menus, departs)

Very good, and may I say, sir, an excellent choice.

WALTER

It's bruchetta. Like little pizzas without the cheese.

BRANDON

Bruchetta.

WALTER

Don't worry about it. Anyone goes 20 for 24 in college
football,
12 for 14 pro can call it whatever he wants. Ever
drink a thousand
dollar bottle of wine? Steward!

TONI

It's a waste, Walter. He hardly drinks.

WALTER

It's a celebration. Just because he's out with a
couple of reformed
drunks doesn't mean he can't enjoy himself.

TONI

I was a lot of things, Walter, but I was never a drunk.

BRANDON

bottle of
Actually, truth be told, I've never had a 12 dollar
water either.

WALTER

He thinks we're fighting.

BRANDON

No. I just, this place is great.

TONI

--Watch out, Walter, he's a fixer.

WALTER

175 calls on the 900 number.

TONI

Did you call home? Let 'em know how you did? How
you're doing?

BRANDON

I will tomorrow. My mom works nights at the casino,
she'll sleep
till three.

TONI

Are you close with your parents?

WALTER

He's very close. They sound terrific.

TONI

Is your name Brandon?

BRANDON

Oh, they're great. We talk all the time.

TONI

What're they like?

BRANDON

Mom's terrific. Amazing lady. I got a little brother,
Denny,
going to college next year. Complete motor head.
Dad's a...
well he's a sports nut. He was, I mean, it all came
from that.

WALTER

Kid grew up with the frigging Cleavers...

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

WALTER, TONI and BRANDON finish dessert.

WALTER

I should've ordered two.

TONI

What'd the doctor say, Walter?

WALTER

Oh yeah, I've been meaning to tell you. I had a check-up yesterday.

Afterwards

he was very concerned. He sat me down, looked me in the eye and said, "Walter, who do you like in the Buffalo/Oakland game?"

WALTER laughs. He reaches to Toni's plate, lifts a dessert pitcher.

WALTER

You didn't touch the sauce.

TONI

Neither should you, Walter.

WALTER

I read chocolate's good for you.

TONI

I'm not raising a kid alone.

WALTER

Don't get dramatic, Toni. In biblical times you'd just move in with my brother Morty.

TONI shoots him a look and WALTER quickly sets down the sauce.

WALTER

--Wow. What a meal. Do you feel good, Brandon?
Content?

BRANDON

Very.

WALTER

Yeah, I can tell. Don't be. Ever. One week's over, another begins. The past is merely a prologue. In this job you have to push the envelope every day.

BRANDON glances at a nearby table, catches the eye of a stunning

MEN. WALTER
GIRL seems
bored as the two big men heartily chow down.

WALTER
Look at that. Beauty and the beasts. What do you
think of her,
Brandon?

BRANDON
She's cute.

WALTER
Cute doesn't half cover it. The girl's gorgeous. And
bored
her from
again, Brandon.
out of her mind. Waiting for some young buck to save
those two gorillas. Check it out. She's eyeing you

BRANDON
So are the two guys she's with.

WALTER
I'll bet you 10-to-1 on a 1000 you can't pick her up,
cash, if
you leave with her.

Toni
and open
C'mon Walter. You might as well go to Atlantic City
a house account. You know you can't gamble.

WALTER
Who's gambling? It's a challenge. If Brandon leaves
with her
than he
I'll give
I give him ten thousand dollars, that's probably more
made last year. If not, he gives me a grand, which
to you.

BRANDON
I don't bet, Walter.
(glancing over, look from the GIRL)
... But I do love a challenge.

WALTER

All right. Before you bust a move, just one thing...

(talks across the table, addressing the MODEL and the
two MEN)

Excuse me, I don't mean to interrupt but

Walter con'd

I have to know what's going on here.

You're drop dead gorgeous and your dates

look like they haven't missed a meal

since Christ died. Seriously, you

two are eating like you have a date

with the electric chair. What's the story with you

three? I'm
district.

not gonna sleep if I don't know. Lemme guess. Garment

The Hardy boys make lingerie and you're a model. That

- I'm
fork.

it? Close? Sprechenzee English? Sit down, sit down -

just joking. I better stop before I get stabbed with a

Bon apetit.

(turning back, TONI staring at him)

TONI

What the hell was that?

WALTER

I'll send over a bottle of champagne.

Toni

You'll pick up their check.

WALTER

The voice of reason. She's right. I owe 'em a meal.

Hey --
bathroom.

here we go, Brandon, your girlfriend's going to the

stairs. The GIRL glides by their table. Heads up a flight of

WALTER

Well get moving, slick.

Brandon

After that introduction?

WALTER

could Hey, I just raised the bar. C'mon, kid. John Anthony
close her.

Beat. BRANDON looks from WALTER to TONI.

TONI

I'd prefer Brandon...

the stairs BRANDON smiles. He walks through the restaurant, up
before him. as the WOMEN'S ROOM door opens and the GIRL emerges

She regards BRANDON. Jaded, disintested air.

BRANDON

You're beautiful.

GIRL

(stepping past)

Excuse me.

BRANDON

I just want to get to know you.

GIRL

You just want to get into my pants.

BRANDON

don't I want to get into your mind, your heart, your soul. I
see you wearing any pants in this equation.

smiles. Beat. This could go either way before -- the GIRL

BRANDON

I'm Brandon. What's your name?

GIRL

Alex.

BRANDON

Alexandria. Beautiful name for a beautiful girl.

BRANDON leans in close, talking too low now for us to hear.
Selling hard. ALEXANDRIA laughs at something he says and --

INT. MOVING CAB - NIGHT

BRANDON and the GIRL all over each other and --

INT. GIRL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BRANDON'S
rising and
up --GIRL
city spires
40th floor of a luxury high rise. In the darkness,
seen naked on a big bed, GIRL straddling him, body
falling, pace quickening, back arching. BRANDON looks
silhouetted against the floor-to-ceiling windows --
sparkling all around and --

OMIT

INT. BROWNSTONE BACK STAIRWELL - DAY

WALTER and BRANDON reach the second floor landing,
stand outside
a solid steel door.

WALTER

Everything you've ever done's been leading up to this moment.
Put your ear to the door. Hear that? It's the sound of possibilities.
The din of greatness.

and -- WALTER turns the knob, BRANDON nearly tumbles through

INT. BROWNSTONE SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Phones Another world. A dozen SALESMEN work in a large room.
dozen GIRLS ring. FAXES churn. Numbers are called out. A half-
stroll the space, deliver betting and tip sheets.

WALTER

Then the We use the 800 number and free tips to bait the hook.
bettors are
bounced to our sales staff.

Brooklyn GIRL) (stopping at the front desk, talking to a pretty

you know You're looking lovely today, Tammy. Give it up baby,
what I need.

numbers. TAMMY smiles, hands WALTER a long list of names and

the room. WALTER studies the sheet as he walks BRANDON through

WALTER

who's This is the day's phone sheet, it's a list of everyone
leads equal called. Only way to keep track of the action. All
money.

The BRANDON'S POV -- walking by SALESMEN doing their thing.
SOUTHIE. first is a chain smoker, battering ram tone. This is

Southie

Now stop Did I not tell you that game was going over the total?

holding back and let's make some serious dough...
What's our game plan this week? Look, Mr. Mitch,
collect from
we'll discuss
your bookie, wire our pitiful frigging share and then
the goddamn game plan.

The second MAN'S HERBIE. Slight. Polite. Soothing
tone.

HERBIE

Trust me, we're going to turn all this around... I'm
aware last
substantial
weekend was difficult... Well of course I do, that's a
sum--

(cupping the phone, to WALTER)

--He's a bit miffed about our picks

WALTER

Fuck him if he can't take a joke.

BRANDON

You're telling me that all this is legal?

WALTER

We're just
'em.
It better be. Five of these guys are off-duty cops.
advising people how to bet, not making the bets for

Hawks.
C'mon, I want you to hear our best salesman, Reggie

REGGIE/INTO PHONE

be honest
time for
call me
--It says here your minimum bet's five grand, so let's
now, can you
move 50 large on this game or not?... I don't have
this shit, Jimmy. I
know you're a loser, because if you
were such a big winner you wouldn't have paid money to
today. Vegas is calling, I'm putting you on hold.

(pressing hold)

What's up big Wally, you slummin' today!

This the new kid?

WALTER

Brandon Lang, meet Reggie.

REGGIE

You're the QB that went off on the refs.

(BRANDON shamefully nods)

refs cost
I like
--Yeah, but you covered! Shit, as much money as the
us every year, that was pure. Totally crystal. Hell,
you already. Even if you did get the best office.

WALTER

(re: an item on the sports ticker)

Barker's not playing this weekend?

REGGIE

Hamstring.

BRANDON

tantrum, he'll
play Sunday.

WALTER and REGGIE exchange a glance, they can use that
and --

sales room.

One office is crammed with clutter, bears a
prominent KEEP
OUT sign on the door. Inside, a big, bearded MAN wolfs
a breakfast
burrito, scours the sports pages. In the other office
sits a
suited, studious-looking MAN in his 30s, talking on a
headset--

INT. OFFICE OVERLOOKING SALES ROOM - SAME TIME - DAY

call.
JERRY SYKES types stats into a computer as he fields a

Three other computer screens flash football info and data.

A framed
vault, the
Creator
Large, complex wall graphs chart esoteric team trends.
promotional picture shows JERRY standing in a bank
banner type below reading "Jerry 'The Source' Sykes,
of The Sykes Sports Wagering System."

JERRY

(typing on a computer as he speaks)

Astroturf
base, like
abrasion
makes a big
--I know it's a new stadium, I'm asking if they used
or Astroplay?... Astroplay, it has a rubber silica
ground up tires... Look, I don't have time to explain
indexes and resistance scales to you, trust me, it
fucking difference...

BRANDON around)
(looking through the glass, seeing WALTER showing

crew, do
So bribe a security guard, sneak in with the grounds
what you have to -- this is what I pay you for.

INT. ENCLOSED OFFICE - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

appointed.
WALTER and BRANDON enter. It's spacious. Nicely

A glass partition overlooks the sales room.

WALTER

weekend.
I had three guys who picked games. I fired one last

here out
How
I'm giving you his job. This is your office. From
your picks are going straight to our biggest customers.
do you like it?

BRANDON

What's not to like?

JERRY SYKES appears at the door. Fast glance at
BRANDON, attention
to WALTER --

JERRY

The Miami/New York point spread shifted a half tick up
to 10.

WALTER

What do you think?

JERRY

Miami's still a lock. The win/loss ratios and RPI
ratings are
off the charts. I'm keeping it on my sheet.

WALTER

Jerry's our top handicapper, came to me straight out of
grad
school. Jerry, meet the new kid in town.

JERRY

Whoa, phone guy makes good. Big jump from the 900
numbers.
Watch out you don't get a nose bleed. Just kidding,
best of
luck, I gotta get back to work.

BRANDON

Pleasure meeting you. By the way, Jerry, New York's
gonna win
straight up. They always play the fish tight. Tonight
it's
foregone, they win outright.

JERRY

Really? Listen up, stick to college, sonny. You have
to work
up to pro ball around here. Nice try though.

WALTER

(watching JERRY walk away)

I got three guys who can handicap and 20 who can sell
but I never
had one who could do both, not really, not until now.

BRANDON

You mean me?

WALTER

Not you. John Anthony.

BRANDON

John Anthony doesn't exist.

WALTER

That's a shock 'cause I'm standing in his office and
you're sitting in his chair!

BRANDON

Look, making predictions is one thing -- but pushing
people to bet, it's not me.

WALTER

Pushing people? Get real, this country was built on
gambling.

Look at Wall Street -- one big casino. The state
spends millions hawking the lottery. If people want to pay for advice
on who to bet, who are we to say no? Stop being selfish,
spread the word! Check your bible, Brandon, tis better to give
than receive.

BRANDON

You got a whole room full of salesmen.

WALTER

Big bettors don't want to talk to a middle man, they
want to speak to the guy making the picks -- and you're picking
80 percent winners.

WALTER CON'D

What's the matter? Gonna lose your purity? C'mon,
what do you think selling is? We're just talking a few well-timed
phrases.

Let's start with an easy one. A throw-away. "I don't
want your money, I want your bookie's fucking money?"

BRANDON

I don't want your money --

WALTER

--Jesus, don't start that shit again. Sell me.

BRANDON

I don't want your money, I want your bookie's money!

WALTER

What happened to the fuck?

BRANDON

Nothing, I just don't talk like that.

WALTER

I can't have someone working for me who can't say fuck.

BRANDON

It's not that I can't. Why do I have to?

WALTER

the precise
predicaments and
is your
feeling and fucking flavor of life's various
certain concepts the way a well-placed fuck can. Fuck
friend. Fuck can be your best friend.

BRANDON

using
I'm happy for you and your friend, Walter, but I'm not
it.

WALTER

him.
Chaucer used it 600 years ago. It was good enough for
C'mon--

(calling out to the SALESMEN)

--this fucking guy has a problem saying fuck!

A chorus of "Fuck yous" fill the air.

WALTER

Fuck he,
C'mon, repeat after me -- fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck.
fuck she, fuck me, fuck them, fuck me -- try it.

BRANDON

It's not me. Let it go.

WALTER

Backbone. Almost as good. We'll keep working on the other thing...

So, you really like New York in tonight's game?

EXT. MANHATTAN - MID-DAY

Looking down Fifth. Thousands of heads in a hurry to get somewhere.

Here comes BRANDON and WALTER.

BRANDON

Where are we going?

WALTER

Continue your education.

INT. MANHATTAN APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A well dressed WOMAN answers. WALTER and BRANDON stand before her.

WALTER

We're here for the gambler's anonymous meeting...

INT. MANHATTAN APARTMENT - DAY

The GROUP sit in a circle, listen as a BUSINESSMAN, near tears, gives his testimony.

BUSINESSMAN

...I mean you'd think with two mortgages out, repo guys staking out my car, my job on the line and my wife threatening to leave, you'd think I'd have the goddamn brains to stop, instead of staying in the chase, doubling down, which of course is what I did... I know I'm sick because I keep thinking if I just pulled that

going
game out then I got a lock on the parlay and I'm flush
into Monday night and--

(breaking down, unable to continue)

MEMBER #1

... It's a disease, Leon.

MEMBER #2

Admitting you have a problem is the first
step.

BUSINESSMAN/LEON

big fucking
Then I guess I'm doing pretty good because I got one
problem.

beat.
Someone claps. Everyone joins in. LEON smiles. Warm

WALTER suddenly stands. BRANDON watches, concerned.

WALTER

My name's Walter. I'm new to the group.

(various "hellos")

years. Once
friends,
Hi. I've been going to meetings like this for 18
a week, every Friday night, for 18 years. This, my
is my 936th consecutive meeting.

(enthusiastic applause)

to a
cent.
Thank you. Thanks. And my hand to God, I haven't been
track, casino or bet a game that whole time. Not a

(murmurs of approval)

like Leon
it's that
I've listened to thousands of sob stories by people
here, and I gotta say, Leon -- if I learned one thing
gambling is not your problem.

LEON

It's not?

WALTER

Not even close. You're a lemon. Like a bad car,
there's something inherently defective in you. And you. And me! All of
us here -- we're lemons! Big, juicy, acidic, ice-tea flavoring
lemons!
We look like everyone else but we're defective because
when most people make a bet they want to win, while we, the
degenerate gamblers of the world, we're subconsciously playing to
lose.
All humans like going to the edge of the abyss, but
what makes us different is we go all the way and hurl ourselves
off into the void! And we like doing it so much we do it time
after time after time! Me? I always felt most alive when they
were raking away the chips, and every one here knows what I'm
talking about.
People like us, even when we win, it's just a matter
of time before we give it all back. But when we lose, and I
mean the kind of loss that makes your asshole pucker to the size
of a decimal point, there's a moment when you're standing
there and you've just recreated the worst possible nightmare this
side of malignant cancer for the 20th goddamn time and you
suddenly realize -- hey, I'm still here, I'm still breathing,
I'm still alive! In order to really live you have to be aware of
your own mortality -- and a losing bet of a certain size is
one of the best ways

WALTER CON'D

I know of getting that feeling. When you win, you defy
death,
but when you lose,
you survive it, and that's remarkable!

constantly
your fucked
exist, to

Us lemons, we fuck shit up on purpose! We need to
remind ourselves
that we're alive! Gambling's not the problem, Leon,
up need to feel something, to convince yourself you
test what's really real, that's the problem!

BICYCLE MESSENGER

betting
Hey! You're the guy I see on tv every weekend selling
picks!

WALTER

... Yeah. So?

This guy peddles a tout service on tv.

WALTER

door.
meeting?
Check the charter, buddy, we all left our jobs at the
You gonna toss an ex-alcoholic bartender out of an AA

BICYCLE MESSENGER

(to BRANDON)

Hey, didn't you come with this jerk?

BRANDON

... No, I mean, we walked in together --

WALTER

(handing out business cards)

put it
-- My card -- we're topping 80 percent this season --
in your wallet, in case you fall off the wagon --

INT. APARTMENT ELEVATOR - DAY

WALTER and BRANDON riding down in silence. Finally --

BRANDON

What the fuck was that?!

WALTER

... What'd you just say?

BRANDON

You heard me! I said what was that?

WALTER

No, you said "What the fuck?" That's what you said.

BRANDON

So?

WALTER

That was great! It was all worth it! Don't you see? I
felt
proud of
your anger because of that one word! Well done! I'm
you! The progress you're making Brandon, I gotta say,
it's exhilarating!

OMIT

INT. SALESROOM - DAY

games play
cluttered
a quick
Cacophony of calls. Building buzz. College football
in the BG. The big, bearded MAN exits his pack-rat
work space, strides to the office coffee machine, pours
cup. BRANDON approaches, extends a hand.

BRANDON

Hey, I stopped by to say hi, I'm Brandon.

BIG MAN

(averting his gaze, walking past)

Congratulations.

BRANDON

I'm picking now with you and Jerry.

CHUCK

(ducking back into his office)

Whatever.

KEEP OUT
The MAN shuts the door, leaves BRANDON looking at the

exchange.

sign. SOUTHIE stops for a coffee, has seen the

anxious

SOUTHIE
Don't take it personal. Chuck's got a condition, get's
around people.

walls and--

CHUCK closes his blinds, blocks out his glassed-in

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

when

BRANDON'S poring over sports pages and injury reports

lead sheet.

TAMMY enters his office, sits on his desk, extends a

cleaners. We

TAMMY
His name's Amir, he's a dime better. Owns a dry
got him for the subscription. He's on line three.
(leans in, gives BRANDON a kiss)

'em tiger.

TAMMY
Walter wanted your first call to be special. Go get

BRANDON
(picking up)
Amir, my man, John Anthony here!

INT. NEW JERSEY DRY CLEANER - DAY

sleepless

A MIDDLE EASTERN MAN (ratty t-shirt, beard stubble,
look) stands in the back of a low-end dry cleaners.

AMIR
Yes, hello.

BRANDON

running wild
Saturday
large?

Today's your day, Amir! It's a Pamplona thing, I'm
in the streets this weekend! Starting with the hottest
of my life! How much can you lay with your bookie? 20

Amir

but... Look,

You crazy? No way. I was betting a thousand a game
I saw an ad. I was just calling to see--

BRANDON

six points!

--Amir, this is my lock of a lifetime! Texas plus the
They win by two touchdowns!

Amir

Really? I like Oklahoma in that game.

BRANDON

(looks up, sees WALTER watching)

Texas even

Oklahoma huh? Okay... well considering that, I like
more now.

Amir

I shouldn't have called. Thank you for--

BRANDON

biggest win

--Amir, buddy, I'm talking about banging out the
of your life.

WALTER crosses, whispers to BRANDON. Into the phone:

BRANDON

Hold on, I got Vegas on the line.

(pressing HOLD)

WALTER

our clients
the phone,

There's only one thing you have to know about any of
-- they're all in the hole. The second they pick up

feel

wham! Right to the point! You're above them! Let 'em
it! More confidence! More John Anthony!

(punches speaker phone)

BRANDON/into phone

Amir, what's your favorite drink?

AMIR

Favorite drink? I dunno, Pina Colada.

BRANDON

this is
large on

Tomorrow we gotta get you a new drink. But for now,
what you're gonna do. First, you're going to bet 20
Texas, then you're going to put on a

concoction with

Hawaiian shirt, whip up your sweet little rum
the orange slice and

the cherry, turn on the game and play

with the little umbrella while you sit

back and watch Texas tear those Okies a

new asshole -- and when you call me back

mouth will

after winning 20 G's the first thing out of your

have another!"

be words every fratboy knows -- "Thank you, sir, may I

AMIR

... What about payment?

BRANDON

Good question. What about it?

Amir

Well how much is this going to cost me?

BRANDON

your problem

We take a percentage if WE win, Amir -- not exactly
of late, is it?

Amir

What if I don't pay?

BRANDON

So make

It's simple, you don't get any more picks. Comprende?
the bet, make the drink and let's roll this into
something big!

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

BRANDON jamming, using a phone headset.

BRANDON

yesterday!
man who
send me
this wave

To hell with power ratings -- McNab lost his dog
Hunting accident. Everyone knows you don't mess with a
just lost his dog! Take Atlanta plus the points and
ten thou Western Union by tomorrow, Stan -- let's ride
into Sunday!

(punching a new call)

takes

Denny! Sorry to keep you on hold, bro... Hell yeah it
pictures, bitchen

Green Bay
-- go
send you
your big

little phone, huh? Now I got something else for ya,
against Minnesota, take the Cheesheads... That's right
to a sports book and put 500 hundred on 'em... So I'll
the money to bet... Don't worry about it, just JPEG
brother a smile when you win.

INT. SALES ROOM - DAY

WALTER paces like a hyped-up Ahab as his SALESMEN jam.

SOUTHIE

Billy, thanks for the 15,000 Fed Ex. What're you up,
160 or something?

Did you ever go 12-2 betting college football before?
Didn't think so. Now, Greenbay--Dallas--Cleveland--100,000
across the board, got it?

REGGIE

The fuck do you care how he does it? And where the
hell's our 30 grand for hitting that 3-team college parlay last
night?

HERBIE

(sipping a cup of tea)

Do this, call your off-shore sports book right now and
put the whole 100,000 on Green Bay-Dallas-Cleveland, it's
called a three-team parlay and pays 6-1. I do appreciate the 40,000 you
sent us today, but let me assure you we've only just begun to
make serious money.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

NFL GAMES fill the TV screens. Theme music, announcers
and action create a frenetic pace.

TIME LAPSE

SAME SHOT. LATER. Sunday sports start winding down
and --

TIME LAPSE

SAME SHOT. LATER. All the screens are dark save one,
where the last game of the day finally ends in overtime and -
-

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

fountain. BRANDON pulls the headset, heads out to the water
SALESMEN work the phones, glance at him as he passes.
Herbie
... Hey -- great job.

INT. WALTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BRANDON sits TONI in the kitchen cooking pasta. Moving fast.
horse. in the living room, watches JULIA ride WALTER like a
Music on the stereo.

JULIA

Faster daddy!
WALTER crawls around the room, stops before BRANDON,
grins.

WALTER

Jesus, you're 10-2 in pro football? 85 percent for the weekend?
a mutant.

JULIA

Go daddy!
WALTER whinnies like a horse, keeps crawling. BRANDON
goes into the kitchen. TONI cooking at the stove, referring to a
daily planner, talking on the phone.

TONI

Tuesday I work Monday's no good because I take Julia to ballet.
couple late at the salon. Wednesday's a maybe if I can move a
want to clients to after six but I'll have to check. I really
tomorrow. come in with him. Listen, I have to call you back

(grabbing a pot about to boil over)

BRANDON

What's all the commotion?

TONI

program. I
trainer

The doctor, thank God, put Walter, on an exercise
want to be there the first time he goes. Make sure the
understands Walter's aversion to consistency.

BRANDON

Aversion to consistency?

TONI

He's always been that way.

BRANDON

Well that's consistent.

TONI

CLOSE ON -- WALTER watches from the living room -- sees
and BRANDON laughing, enjoying each other and --

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

WALTER, TONI and BRANDON relaxing after dinner.

WALTER

Life is fucking... good.

(burp, regarding BRANDON)

Let's talk about making it better.

TONI

Duck, Brandon, here it comes.

WALTER

I've been tracking you since last year.

TONI

Don't let him steamroll you.

WALTER

Anthony on

--Can I get the damn thing out? I want to put John
tv this week.

BRANDON

That's me. You mean me.

WALTER

That's right. You, John Anthony. You're one in the same.

TONI

Go on -- get to the good part, Walter.

WALTER

do this
shit,
works.
way.

Hold on. Before I say another word, understand -- you thing, Brandon, and from here out you gotta eat, sleep, breathe, walk, talk and fart John Anthony. It's not just a new persona. You can't play it. You gotta live it. That's how this The only way it works. You have to sell it all the way.

TONI

Think it over, Brandon, don't decide now.

BRANDON

It sounds like a promotion.

WALTER

Bet your ass it is. Five-star.

BRANDON

--I'm in.

TONI

you'd

Well that's a thoughtful response. Here I was, worried rush your decision.

BRANDON

Ramen

It's the only move. For six years I've been living on noodles. For the first time in a long time I've got something going. If that means I gotta do a little acting, fine.

WALTER

now Brandon
is as
on-fucking-water"

Living, not acting. You understand that as of right
Lang with his fettucini knee and his self-fucking pity
flat dead as Donald Trump's hair and John "I-can-walk-
Anthony has taken his place?

TONI

Listen to what he's asking you, Brandon.

WALTER

This is gonna
you. Do

She's right. There's no going back. I mean that.
cost me. I'm talking about building an empire around
you understand that?

BRANDON

course
crystal

... Should I wait a little to create some tension? Of
I understand, I'm John Fucking Anthony. I've got the
ball...

INT. TONI'S SALON - DAY

cutting.
chatting
and --

BRANDON'S FACE FILLS SCREEN. Scissors come in, start
TONI begins bringing John Anthony to life. BRANDON
her up in the chair, TONI laughing at something he says

INT. BARNEY'S MEN'S STORE - DAY

a suit.
SALESMAN.

BRANDON (new haircut) stands in private room, modeling
WALTER nearby, looks through racks of clothes with a

INT. MERCEDES DEALERSHIP - DAY

showroom as

BRANDON (new haircut, new suit) walks through the
WALTER talks with a DEALER.

WALTER

I need a new car for my friend.

DEALER

(to BRANDON)

Do you have any credit?

BRANDON

No.

DEALER

Walter, do you trust him?

WALTER

With my wife naked.

DEALER

(calling to BRANDON)

In that case, which one do you want?

BRANDON comes over, runs his hand over a sleek, silver
SL500.

WALTER

I think he likes that one.

EXT. SIXTH AVENUE BAR - DAY

reading "900
the sidewalk

The silver SL500 pulls to the curb. License plate
KING." A pair of \$500 shoes emerge. BRANDON stands on
as the DOORMAN comes up, eyes the car.

Doorman

I'll watch it for you.

(seeing the license plate)

What's "900 King?"

BRANDON

(handing him a card)

I don't lose.

HEAVY
and --
BRANDON heads into the bar, meets WALTER and a group of
HITTERS outside. John ANTHONY instantly comes alive

INT. TV PRODUCTION HOUSE - NIGHT

BRANDON and WALTER sitting side-by-side, getting made-
up.

MAKE-UP ARTIST/to brandon

You're sweating a lot honey.

BRANDON nervously regards himself in the mirror.
WALTER sees.

WALTER

You okay?

BRANDON

I'm scared shitless.

WALTER

You've been
game.
Don't worry about your lines, it's all scripted.
here before, kid, just think of it like a football

BRANDON

This is different.

WALTER

How?

BRANDON

There's no opponent.

WALTER

Perfect, then you're a lock to win.

INT. TV PRODUCTION HOUSE - NIGHT

a triangular
themed logo
between WALTER
close. CHUCK
table, head

The CAMERA TRACKS to a talk show-like set dominated by
table, three chairs and a backdrop bearing a sports-
and the words - THE SPORTS ADVISORS. BRANDON sits
and JERRY, increasingly nervous as the CAMERAS push
arrives, loud suit, takes a seat at the end of the
down, averting eye contact with everyone.

TECH

30 seconds. Walter, we're not getting your audio.

WALTER

(fumbling with a clipped on mike)

Something's wrong here.

JERRY

(leaning over, plugging in a wire)

guys about
going wireless.

teleprompter.

JERRY looks at BRANDON, staring anxiously at the

JERRY

1000-dollar
suit. Word to
the wise, save the clothes you came in.

TECH

Five, four, three, two, one--

teleprompter.)

(NOTE: WALTER and the PANEL follow text from a

WALTER

America's
Abrams,

Welcome to this week's edition of The Sports Advisors!
premier sports information program with myself, Walter

to the
Anthony! We're
cream rises
mitt time!
it with
what's

Jerry Sykes, Chuck Adler and a truly gifted newcomer
Sports Advisor panel, a substantial find -- John
entering week six in pro football! This is when the
to the top! This is when things get hot! It's oven
This is big-time ball season so let's get right into
the Wizard of Odds -- Jerry "The Source" Sykes! Jerry,
the Sykes System predicting for this weekend?

JERRY

looking at
opportunities.
Chicago
8th straight
Sunday
at New
System uses
wagering.
better
strippers
Call

Walter, my patented computer models tell me we're
nothing less than the perfect storm of betting
But first, last week I cashed in a big-time call on on
as an outright winner over Indianapolis -- making it my
top selection winner right here on this tv show! This
I have 5 match-ups I absolutely love, including Miami
York! Stats, rankings, records, weather, the Sykes
42 proven indexes to eliminate the guesswork from sports
Without my patented, computer-based picks you have a
chance of seeing God knocking on your door with five
and a bag of Bolivian cocaine than winning on your own!
me for my five games! Absolutely free -- 800-238-6648!

WALTER

how to
of

Our experts know how to read between the lines, we know
analyze a point spread, we're not pulling rabbits out
a hat here. Certainly not Chuck Adler --
(turning to CHUCK)
Chuck, you'd probably eat that rabbit if you got your
hands on
it.

CHUCK

(coming suddenly, wildly alive)

I'm the
of business
weekend

\$100

Hell yes -- with a side order of fried bookmaker!!!
grim reaper of bookmakers! I've put more bookies out
than the I.R.S.! How many gamblers did I bail out last
with my game of the year! Denver, a 10-
point underdog beating Cincinatti by two touchdowns! A
bettor made \$10,000!

CHUCK CON'D

Sunday I'm
A blow-out!
children's

A \$500 bettor made \$50,000! I've got six games on
releasing absolutely free! These games are a burial!
A human lock! You can bet your children's unborn
children on these six games -- ABSOLUTELY FREE!!!

WALTER

(finger in his ear)

you blow
returns. Saturday
college match-ups
Sports Advisors

Holy Christ, I forgot my earplugs. Take a break before
a gasket, we'll get back to you after my hearing
comes before Sunday and looking at this Saturday's
is the last but certainly not least member of The
-- John Anthony!

BRANDON

(reading off the teleprompter)

billion
all your

--John Anthony here, the Million Dollar Man with the
dollar plan! From Wall Street to Tokyo to Hollywood,
big money stays and plays with me!

(beat, processing this, suddenly going off the
teleprompter script)

"Million
mean
get behind
the Magic
scientific
quarterback.
the ability
that's
Walter?

--Someone wrote some great stuff for me here but the
Dollar Man," I dunno, it sounds kinda small somehow. I
maybe if you change that M in million to a Z I could
it. They tried all sorts of names, wanted to call me
Man -- but picking 80 percent winners sounds pretty
to me. So let's just call me John. I was a
And every QB knows the key to victory is anticipating --
to see the future and react to it. That is what I do,
the truth, and what do they say about the truth,

WALTER

... It bites you on the ass?

BRANDON

Not in my case. You tell us, Jerry.

JERRY

It sets you free?

BRANDON

picking
I know

That's right, but with me it makes you M-O-N-EE! I'm
80 percent, is that
unbelievable? Well it used to be. I know the leagues!
the players! I

BRANDON CON'D

insider on
been there!
guess
called
trends!
but toss

know the game! I'm your friend on the field! Your
the outside! You can't do what I do if you haven't
Played at the level I have! Maybe you'll get lucky --
right once in a while -- but these match- ups won't be
consistently by anything other than experience! Forget
Throw out every system you possess! Keep your friends

would-if-I-could
their opinions out the window! It's time to change I-
that little to I-can-and-I-am! You wanna know who I like -- call
number at the bottom of your screen!
BRANDON continues. CAMERA on WALTER, watching proudly
and --

INT. WALTER AND TONI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

WALTER walks down the dim hall, looks in on JULIA,
sleeping.

INT. WALTER AND TONI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dim darkness. Silence. Then someone bumps into
something.
Muffled curse. A light goes on. TONI sits up in bed,
sees WALTER fully dressed, across the room, holding his shoes.

WALTER

I'm not here. Go back to sleep.

TONI

It's four in the morning.

WALTER

(continues to his dresser, manic)

there watching
What a show! You should have seen him! I'm sitting
him roll and I swear he made me want to grab a phone
and call!

primed
I took the sales boys out to Smith and Wo's. Get 'em
for the
weekend. Chuck got drunk, took a swing
at one of the deer heads on the wall.

Monday. Put
Just blowing off steam. I'm gonna hire more guys

okay. There's in more phones. Everything's amping up. It's
room. I'll tear down a
few walls, fit another 10 desks down
there easy. I'm gonna do a whole dot-com thing around
him!
Oh shit, if I had me when I was his age... I never had
a
protege. Someone you hand it all down to. Anything
happens
to me, he steps in! Just knowing that, with the
thing... I

mean that's just beautiful!

(changing into workout clothes)

Just beautiful.

TONI

What are you doing?

WALTER

volume this
he can
real deal.
Guy like
Going for a run. See the sunrise. We're doubling
week. And doubling it again after that. He can pick,
sell, he's gonna change things around here. He's the
Knows sports from the inside. That's how he picks.
him comes along once in a -- a --

TONI

-- 100 years.

WALTER

Yeah, a lifetime.

TONI

Walter, come to bed.

WALTER

Not tired.

TONI

You're exhausted.

WALTER
I'm just gonna run the bridge, up Fifth, circle Central
Park,
be back in no time.

TONI
Get in bed. Lie down next to me. Come on. Come here,
Walter.

WALTER
Just a quick once-around.

TONI
Roll on your stomach for a minute.

WALTER
Just for a sec. I've gotta meet the trainer tomorrow.
Told
me to run. Run in place, or from one place to
another...

WALTER lays down. TONI gently massages his back. She
leans
in, whispers to him. We sense she's done this before.

TONI
--I know. Of course you do. This is no time to sleep,
Walter...
Can't sleep now... Just because you're so tired...
Completely,
totally, utterly exhausted... I'll be here when you get
back
from your

TONI CON'D
run... Right beside you... You go on now, baby, I'll
stay right
here... It's okay... Close your eyes... Just for a
second before
you leave... I'm not going anywhere... I'll just hold
you--

(quietly crying)

I'll wait right here for you...

TONI'S whisperings become a constant, soothing, mantra.
WALTER'S

TONI loosens
covers.
WALTER close,
eyes close. Dressed in sweats and sneakers. Gone.
his laces, covers him with a blanket, slides under the
TONI kills the light. Seen in darkness. Holding
draping a protective arm around and --

INT. SALES ROOM - DAY

dolly in
SOUTHIE and
REGGIE at the water fountain, watch the room expand.
A SLEDGE HAMMER smashes through a wall. DELIVERYMEN
new desks and chairs to accomodate more salesmen.

SOUTHIE

now.
You see him this morning? Wearing those suits to work

REGGIE

him.
He keeps picking 90 percent I'll press the fuckers for

TAMMY.
WALTER walks in, stops at the front desk, speaks to

WALTER

up.
What a weekened! Helluva Christmas bonus if this keeps
Where'd you hide the phone sheet?

studies it,
TAMMY locates the sheet, hands it to him. WALTER
starts away. He sees something, stops. Walking back -

WALTER

(to TAMMY, pointing on the sheet)

Who's this? This guy here -- Lang?

TAMMY

I dunno, he said it was personal.

WALTER

Did Brandon take the call?

Tammy

He wasn't in.

WALTER

Don't mention it to him. And don't patch the guy
through. Say
Brandon doesn't work here, you can't reach him.

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

BRANDON at his desk, reading The New York Post. JERRY
enters.

JERRY

You know anything about Stokley being out this weekend
against
the New York?

BRANDON

A knock would be nice, Jerry.

JERRY

I'm underwater here, man. Yes or no?

BRANDON

No.

JERRY

You know something... You hear anything, let me know.
That's
how this works.

BRANDON

I'll rush right over. Stat.

JERRY

All inside information gets shared.

BRANDON

Inside? I've got nothing inside.

JERRY

F.Y.I. -- we work as a team here, that's the way we do
it. I'll
do the same for you. So stop holding out on me, babe.

BRANDON

This wouldn't have anything to do with
you going 30 percent this weekend, would it?

JERRY

Listen you little shit, I've been doing this six years
to your one.

WALTER

(entering, to JERRY--)
What are you doing in here? Hit the phones and do some
damage control -- re-write your frigging computer program.

JERRY

Hey, it was a fucked weekend.

WALTER

For some people.

(to BRANDON)

WALTER

There's a 50-dime bettor on line three. Wants to talk
to John Anthony.

BRANDON

Who?

WALTER

His name's Carl. Carl owns a couple dozen McDonalds
franchises.
Guy's a gazillionaire. That sign out front might as
well be his bank account.

JERRY

No no no no no. What'd you mean? I landed that lead!
That's my guy!

WALTER

Was.

JERRY

He's raiding my fucking lists!

WALTER

fuck! Get

Your clients are jumping ship you lactose intolerant
outta my sight!

JERRY leaves. BRANDON picks up the phone --

BRANDON

Good--

Carl, John Anthony here, how's the fast-food king...?

INT. WALTER AND TONI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

dressed

The door opens. TONI, carrying groceries, and JULIA,
in ballerina clothes enter, walk into the kitchen.

JULIA

Can we play?

TONI

Okay, let me just put the groceries away.

JULIA

I want to play princess.

TONI

So do I. Go put your dress on.

tacky,

--

JULIA runs off to her room when TONI suddenly spies a
woman's jacket draped on a chair. TONI regards it and

hall.

from his

wallet.

The CAMERA tracks TONI through the apartment. Down the

Voices heard. A man and woman as -- WALTER emerges
office with a CALL GIRL. He's pulling bills from his

WALTER

Easy 200, huh? Here's something extra for a cab.

GIRL

Thanks, Walter. Talk to ya.

WALTER

(seeing TONI)

I can explain.

The CALL GIRL slides by, shows herself out. TONI
staring.

WALTER

No, no, you think she was for me? Are you crazy? No.
I just had her come up to pay her. I got her for John.

TONI

I don't give a damn who you got her for! We have a 6-
year-old in the house, Walter! What the hell is going on here?
(looking in, checking the made bed)

Don't bullshit me!

WALTER

You think I slept with her? C'mon!

TONI

Who the hell's John?

WALTER

Brandon, we all call him John now.

TONI

You got Brandon a hooker?

WALTER

New city, no friends, working all hours.

TONI

What the hell are you creating here, Walter?

WALTER

I don't understand this. I was helping him out, that's
all.

TONI

Helping him? Really? Like the others before him?

WALTER

This kid's different, he's different -- wait a minute.
has nothing to do with you, you know I do business up
here.
Why are you so angry?

TONI
Are we actually going to have this conversation? Are
you completely clueless?

WALTER
You're jealous. Look at you!

TONI
Of what?!

WALTER
Gee, I don't know -- Brandon screwing someone?

TONI
You really are fucking crazy, Walter! That never
entered my mind!

WALTER
That's not where those thoughts enter.

TONI
Fuck you!
TONI goes into the kitchen, slams the door. Calling to
her --

WALTER
You'll be happy to know he didn't sleep with her. I
paid her off just for coming. No pun intended.

WALTER grimaces, clutches his side. WALTER pops one,
two --
princess
stifles
three pills from a vial, let's them settle as JULIA,
clothes, runs down the hall, leaps in his arms. WALTER
the pain of her embrace. Carries her down the hall.

WALTER
... Julia my jewel, you're getting big angel.

JULIA
Can we play princess, Daddy?

WALTER
Course we can. Who am I gonna be?

JULIA

You're the king, daddy, like always.

INT. SPORTS ADVISORS TV SET - NIGHT

MAKE-UP

BRANDON practicing John Anthony expressions. A pretty
ARTIST finishes touching him up.

MAKE-UP ARTIST

thinking maybe
help me

I made 500 bucks off your picks last week. I was
we could go out later and get a little wild... you can
blow some.

BRANDON

Let's get really wild and you can blow mine.

place
the side,

The GIRL laughs. BRANDON crosses the stage, takes his
on the set between WALTER and JERRY. CHUCK sits off to
eating a muffin. WALTER looks over at BRANDON --

WALTER

Look at you. I like the tan.

BRANDON

ladies do love

Toni put one of those lamps down in my room. The
it.

TECHNICIAN

60 seconds!

WALTER

John's up first tonight, Jerry.

JERRY

What?

WALTER

John Anthony's leading off tonight.

JERRY

John Anthony's leading?

WALTER

Somebody tell the engineer there's an echo in here.

JERRY

lousy
percentages --
Two years I lead and you bury me in the deck over a few
fucking weekends? The Sykes System's based on
the long haul.

WALTER

No, that's called a mutual fund, Jerry.

JERRY

(to CHUCK)

You gonna sit for this shit?

WALTER --
CHUCK shrugs, finishes his muffin. JERRY turns to

JERRY

... He leads, I'm walking.

WALTER

He's leading.

JERRY unclips his microphone, stands.

WALTER

down!
That's baby talk! You need a fucking rattle! Sit

(staring him down)

everything
kid's school
know,
shneid, start
of course
My gut
but not
give a
look
You probably think you know what I'm gonna say... how
you got I pay for. Your apartment, your car, your
-- and it's true. You'd be right. I do. Now I don't
Jerry, maybe you break your losing streak, end the
winning again and find yourself another job, but then
maybe you don't. I don't see you taking that chance.
says you'll walk out of here on principle or even pride
on a gamble, a hunch yet. And if you do, fuck it. I
shit? The only reason I keep you around is it makes me

loyal and him--

(pointing at BRANDON)

standing
--look good! Now you got three fucking seconds to stop
there like dog
shit on my porch and sit down and shut
the fuck up or you can kiss everything you have
goodbye! The
clock's started.

BRANDON.
Beat. JERRY sinks into his seat. WALTER turns to

WALTER

walked, but
between us.
And you're
you can
See that? He made the safe play. Me, I would've
I'm a fucked-up human being. That's the difference
Right there. Jerry's a statistician, I'm a gambler.
not a gambler, not really -- until you bet more than
afford to lose.

TECHNICIAN

Five, four, three, two, one --

WALTER

Welcome to week 7 of pro football!

INT. SPORTS ADVISORS TV SET - BACK HALL - NIGHT

cell
BRANDON done taping, wiping off make-up, talking on his
--

BRANDON

money,
Hell yeah,
Denny, it's me... What'd I tell ya?... Hey, it's your
dude, you won it... Well did you hook it up yet?...
crank it, let me hear--

INTERCUT - EXT. DENNY AT HOME IN GARAGE - NIGHT

wiring
system BOOMS
wires.

Denny on his cell, crouched under the dash of his car,
a new stereo. He touches two wires and the sound
to life, deafening hip-hop before Denny disconnects the

DENNY

It's the bomb, B!

BRANDON

everything
Sure sounds like it! I'm heading out with some people,
else cool?

DENNY

Everything's great. Did dad reach you?

BRANDON

Dad? No, why?

DENNY

you. I
him through.
He keeps calling. He saw you on tv, wants to talk to
gave him your work number but he says they won't put

BRANDON

Really?

playback
hello and
BRANDON'S eye catches WALTER across the set, watching a
of the show. TONI enters the studio, kisses WALTER

--

INT. TV PRODUCTION HOUSE LOBBY - NIGHT

lobby.
WALTER, BRANDON and TONI exit the stage, enter into the

WALTER

corner. You
I'm starved, there's a new steak house around the

whack

two split a prime rib, I'll get the porterhouse, we'll
it up!

TONI

Let's walk, you could use the exercise.

WALTER

Stop worrying. We're set--

(arm around BRANDON)

Nostra-fucking-damus
--I got the next Jimmy the Greek here! I'm serious!
was a novelty act next to this guy!

BRANDON

Let me ask you something, Walter.

WALTER

Shoot.

BRANDON

Have you been blocking any of my calls?

WALTER

of crazies

Of course. You don't need distractions, there's a lot
out there.

BRANDON

Does that include my father?

WALTER

You're asking, I'll tell you... Yeah.

BRANDON

(striding outside)

Son of a bitch -- for how long?

WALTER

(following)

Week or so.

TONI

Walter.

EXT. TV PRODUCTION HOUSE BUILDING - NIGHT

sidewalk. WALTER and TONI trail BRANDON down the lamp-lit

WALTER

Hold on, Brandon, if I didn't block his calls would you've talked to him? Honestly.

BRANDON

That's not the point!

WALTER

Then what exactly is the point, Brandon? What's the full story here? What's the deal with your old man?

BRANDON

You tell it, you seem to know.

WALTER

--I only know pieces. I was trying to spare you from something.

BRANDON

(stopping under a street light)

Spare me? By blocking my calls? There's nothing you can spare me from. He's a drunk. Left when I was 9. I couldn't compete with a bottle. End of story.

WALTER

... That's it? That's the best you can do? Hell, Toni and I'll match our dysfunctional childhoods against yours any day of the week. My father, 5-foot-arms like this, cock the size of a hebrew national -- if I even looked at him wrong he knocked me across the room like LaMotta. He yelled so much, until I was five I thought my name was asshole. Tell him about you, Toni. Well go on --

TONI

I didn't have a great home-life either.

WALTER

"Great?" Tell him about the uncle--

TONI

--He gets the idea.

WALTER

but the

Don't sugarcoat this shit, you were abused by everybody
family pet, isn't that right, honey?

TONI

Walter, please.

WALTER

(to BRANDON)

happens. I'm
is a new

Your father was a drunk, a jerk -- so what? It
glad I blew him off. Know why? Because what you need
image of a man. How 'bout me?

BRANDON

That's a really scary thought.

WALTER

head! The
what it

If not me, then pick someone else. It's all in your
shit that happened to you, to Toni, to me -- you know
is? Just that, shit that happened.

WALTER CON'D

It's not who we are. After

Walter con'd

the --

all the therapy and the analysis and the meetings and
aaahhhh! -- the one thing I know--

(yelling to the sky)

--WE'RE ALL FUCKED UP! We are all just so fucked up!

(to BRANDON)

here!

Say it! Shout it! Come on, you two -- wallow with me

yells -- A MAN sticks his head out a window down the street,

MAN

I'm trying to sleep, asshole!

WALTER

Dad! Is that you?

MAN

I'll crush you like a beetle!

WALTER

How's Mom?!

MAN

Fucking freak!

WALTER

I love you too! Don't wait up!

doubled
above.
WALTER, TONI and BRANDON all laugh. The three of them
over on the dark, deserted street. MAN screaming from
The ring of a phone begins bleeding in and --

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

the passage
for a
the other,
New furniture and sports photos on the walls suggest
of time. BRANDON stands before a mirror, being fitted
suit by a TAILOR. He has a cigar in one hand, Coke in
talks into a headset as he watches the TAILOR work.

BRANDON

me over
weekend?
Are you serious, Amir? You gonna fucking haggle with
a measly 50 thousand on the 250 grand I won you this

EXT. AMIR'S DRY CLEANERS - DAY

AMIR (sharply attired) stands outside his business,
leaning against
a brand new, red Ferrari as he talks on the phone.

AMIR

Don't get me wrong, John. I'm thankful, very much,
you're amazing,
it's just that 50 thousand seems slightly steep--

BRANDON

--The first time you call me you're in a hole the size
of the
Grand Canyon, you're crying about hocking your fiance's
ring
and this weekend you're phoning me from a suite at the
Bellagio
that I put you in -- you know what -- I'm cutting you
off...
You want to continue with me, I'm tagging on a 10
percent aggravation
tax! Now get to Western Union and shoot me 75 grand by
tonight
and we'll kiss and make up.

(hanging up, to the TAILOR)

No cuff.

(the phone rings, picking up--)

John Fucking Anthony, talk to me.

WOMAN VOICEOVER

This is... May I please speak to a Brandon Lang?

BRANDON

... Mom?

INT. BRANDON'S VEGAS HOME - DAY

BRANDON'S MOM drinking coffee, talking on the phone

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Brandon, is that you?

BRANDON VOICEOVER

That's me.

INTERCUT

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Are you okay?

BRANDON

Never better. Kicking ass and taking names. Did you
get the money I sent?

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Well that's why I'm calling, honey.

BRANDON

Good good good. I talked to Denny. Next month I'm
flying you and him out here. First class. I'll put you up at The
Plaza. You'll love this joint.

BRANDON'S MOTHER

It sounds great, Brandon, but the money -- it's too
much. Where did you get it?

BRANDON

I made it. Earned it. Every fucking cent. Put it in
Denny's college fund.

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Listen to you.

BRANDON

It's just how people talk here.

(looking down at the TAILOR, edge)

How many times I gotta say no cuff?

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Who's this John Anthony person?

BRANDON

He's me. I'm him.

BRANDON'S MOTHER

And he talks like that?

BRANDON

He's pretty fucking salty -- geez, I'm sorry, Mom -- I
mean yeah. Look, the main point is I'm learning a lot here.

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Then you should know you can't be two people, Brandon.

BRANDON

I appreciate the concern, Ma, but the checks I've been
sending
John Anthony.
-- the checks you've been cashing -- those are from

BRANDON'S MOTHER

Funny, I thought they were from my son.

WALTER enters, slaps an airline ticket on his desk.

WALTER

We're going to Puerto Rico!

BRANDON

Gotta put you on hold, Ma.

(pressing a button on the headset)

What's in Puerto Rico?

WALTER

Since Ricky Martin moved out, all that's left are
tourists, cruise
ships and C.M. Novian -- one of the biggest sports
bettors in
the world. He just called. Wants to meet you in
person! To-day!
Flight leaves Lagueardia in 45 minutes.

BRANDON

(activating the headset)

I gotta go, Ma... Ma... Son of a bitch -- my own
fucking mother
hung up on me!

EXT. SAN JUAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

An AIRLINER roars in for landing.

INT. AIRLINE TERMINAL - NIGHT

WALTER and BRANDON pass through FRAME.

BRANDON

What do you know about him?

WALTER

Not much, 'cept for the fact he's a world class prick. treated me worse than my Hong Kong tailor. Never once a call. I've been trying to bag this guy for years. have any idea what this is worth?

Bastard
returned
Do you

BRANDON

No, but I want a bonus if we pull it off.

WALTER

Look at me. There is no if -- it's only when. This called us, remember? You hooked him. Know that.

time he
Sweat that.

BRANDON

Relax, I'll get in character in the car.

WALTER suddenly slows, winces. He angles toward a bathroom.

BRANDON

... Walter?

WALTER grabs for a water fountain, misses, suddenly collapses.

BRANDON

Your vial -- where's your pills, Walter?

WALTER finds the vial, pops it, his chest heaves and spill on the floor. WALTER looks wide-eyed up at BRANDON, mouths "Big one." BRANDON frantically loosens WALTER'S shirt. A crowd gathers. A BUSINESSMAN pulls a cell phone, dials 911.

the pills
BRANDON, mouths
A crowd

BRANDON

Hold on, Walter we're getting help! Oh my God. Listen

to me.

Walter -- Walter. You're gonna be fine. Hold on!

(to the CROWD)

We need a doctor! Is there a doctor?

WALTER

Brandon --

BRANDON

Save your strength. Help's coming. Help's coming.

WALTER

... Do you love me?

BRANDON

Of course I do.

WALTER

Uh-huh.

BRANDON

I do. I really do love you.

WALTER

... How much?

BRANDON

A lot! Now don't talk.

(turning to the CROWD)

We need a doctor!

Several stunned ONLOOKERS run for help. WALTER fading
fast.

WALTER

I believe you. I believe you love me. I love you
too... Just
one thing --

BRANDON

Save your strength, Walter.

WALTER

... Would you love me if this was a joke?

BRANDON

What?

WALTER

I'm fine. Just practicing...

CROWD --

WALTER smiles. Stands. Brushes himself off. To the

the plane.

WALTER

I'm okay! Little gas. Must've had too many peanuts on

The confused ONLOOKERS drift away.

BRANDON

far!!!

You sick fucking fuck! That was too goddamn fucking

WALTER

me! There's

You weren't listening! You're not paying attention to

you can!

no such thing as too far! Push everything as far as

some goddamn

Push it until it starts pushing back and then push

more! Remember that when you're with this guy today!

OMIT

INT. PUERTO RICAN MANSION - DAY

plays.

Palatial. Drapes dance before the open doors. Music

beat.

BRANDON and WALTER sit in the living room. Peaceful

WALTER

wanna

I start to die, fuck the hospital, just sit me down, I

kack here.

shouldered

A beefy BODYGUARD enters followed by a tan, broad

MAN of 50. WALTER extends his hand.

WALTER

associate,

Mr. Novian! What can I say? An honor. This is my

John Anthony.

BRANDON sit. MR. NOVIAN nods, settles in a chair. WALTER and

NOVIAN
You should know I think that most sports services are a complete season. scam... However, I hear your boy here's having quite a season. What's your system?

WALTER
(looking around)
Our system? Fuck that, what's your system?
Walter laughs. Novian stone-faced, glances at his watch when--

BRANDON
It's a privilege to meet you, Mr. Novian. You have a beautiful home. Let's start with how much you bet.

NOVIAN
A million a game, across the board.

BRANDON
Nice round number, is that our ceiling here? Is that the most we're working with?

NOVIAN
"We're" not doing anything until I hear how you feel about this weekend.

BRANDON
Do you rent that yacht out there?

NOVIAN
I own it.

BRANDON
Well, sir, that's how I feel about this weekend. That may sound cocky, I don't care. I didn't come down here to lie.

NOVIAN
Do you have inside information?

speaks for
they know
includes

BRANDON

If I did I wouldn't share that with you. My record
itself. The truth is I know these teams better than
themselves. I'm going 12 for 12 this weekend, and that
the Monday Night parlay.

NOVIAN

Why should I believe you?

BRANDON

to.
With all due respect, Mr. Novian, you can't afford not

NOVIAN

I can afford to do any damn thing I please.

BRANDON

that matter
needs to
Novian... it's
Or was,
Can you? What I'm saying is can you -- can anyone for
-- afford to lose as much as a man like you probably
bet to feel a win? Winning's a funny thing, Mr.
one of those rare commodities on earth money can't buy.
until you called me.

Charged beat. A tight grin's glued to WALTER'S face.

BRANDON

-- in
The price is a quarter million, Mr. Novian -- up-front
addition to a percentage of every game you win.

NOVIAN

Fuck you. I never pay anything up front.

BRANDON

you're betting,
winners, that's
And we've never charged it before. But with what
250 up front's a bargain. You want this weekend's
my offer. Take it or leave it.

NOVIAN

(standing)

... Step outside.

going. BRANDON and WALTER exchange looks, unsure where this is

EXT. NOVIAN'S BALCONY - DAY

topless by NOVIAN and BRANDON regard a group of GIRLS lounging
a pool.

NOVIAN

... Ever pick oranges, Mr. Anthony?

BRANDON

Nope.

NOVIAN

I have, in fact it's how I started.

they're Builds character. See those girls down there? Pretend
build oranges and pick some ripe ones. Take 'em upstairs and
terms. some character. Mr. Abrams and I need to refine the

a bottle BRANDON goes to an ice-filled cooler by the door, pulls
- of champagne, carries it dripping down to the pool and-

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

teams seen. A FOOTBALL BETTING FORM fills FRAME. Two columns of

games checked Point spreads penciled in between them. 11 of 12
off. Monday Night the last to be decided.

unfinished form PULL BACK TO SHOW -- BRANDON in his office, the
before him. A young SALESMAN appears at the door.

YOUNG SALESMAN

They need it, Mr. Anthony.

Night --
minus 3.
34.
-

BRANDON picks up his pen, regards the box for Monday
Seattle or New Orleans? The point spread is Seattle
A box beside it is for the over/under. That number is
BRANDON about to pick when he stops, looks up, smiles -

BRANDON

Three questions. What's your mother's name?

YOUNG SALESMAN

Shelia.

BRANDON

What street did you grow up on?

YOUNG SALESMAN

Atlantic Avenue.

BRANDON

Who do you like Monday night?

YOUNG SALESMAN

I don't know.

BRANDON

Pick one.

YOUNG SALESMAN

That's your job.

BRANDON

I'll do your job tomorrow, today you do mine.

YOUNG SALESMAN

What are you talking about?

BRANDON

Seattle versus

Pick one. Stop stalling. You know who's playing.

New Orleans.

YOUNG SALESMAN

points.

... I dunno. I guess I like Seattle giving the two

BRANDON

(writing on the form)

Over or under?

YOUNG SALESMAN

You can't do that.

BRANDON

Sure I can! Over 34 points or under!

YOUNG SALESMAN

Over!

BRANDON checks it off, gives him the finished form.

YOUNG SALESMAN

going on

I'm not handing that in. Like a million dollars is that game!

BRANDON

can pick.

Like a lot more than that. Relax. I think we know I

Today I'm picking you. The outcome'll be the same.

YOUNG SALESMAN

What if I'm wrong?

BRANDON

Didn't they tell you? There is no if.

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

game.

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL. Final seconds of a hard-fought

pass to a

The Seattle QUARTERBACK'S driving, completes a long

line.

RECEIVER who's brought down at the New Orleans 10-yard

WALTER

They score, we win!

AL MICHAELS/vo from tv

Two seconds

--Kuhn's stopped at the 10! Seattle down by three.

with

on the clock. Kuhn suffered a concussion last week and

mobility -- Hanratty

that foot injury in the first quarter he has no

throws
plane!
three!

drops back, he's out of the pocket, breaks one tackle,
downfield, it's tipped! Raymond's got it! Breaks the
Touch down! Seattle takes it 20 to 17! They win by
What a game!

is packed

The buzz in the BG explodes as we see -- every EMPLOYEE
into WALTER'S office. Riot of celebration all around.

WALTER

100 fucking percent!

and the
lights dim.

Champagne corks start popping. Someone hits the remote
wall of screens fill with a jamming MTV video. The
People start dancing. Cell phones start ringing and -

-

VARIOUS SALESMEN/into phones

-- Call back tomorrow!

degenerate!

-- Who knows who he likes next week you fucking

-- I don't have anything yet!

over/under picks

The YOUNG SALESMAN who made the Monday night and
talks excitedly to SOUTHIE and REGGIE.

YOUNG SALESMAN

something I visualized
picking me was

He kinda mesmerized me, see, and like Spock or
Seattle and the over and he wrote it down! Said
the same as him doing it.

SOUTHIE

What kinda power is that?

REGGIE

Who fucking cares? He's money.

excitement as

JERRY SYKES stands nearby, listening. Whoops of

JERRY moves
wall, out

WALTER jumps up on his desk, starts throwing cash.
through the raucous CROWD, finds BRANDON against a
of the fray, watching WALTER hurl money in the air.

JERRY

Either way
salesmen make

Congratulations, Brandon... Or should I say John?
it's amazing. I must say I am impressed. Letting
your picks? That's balls.

BRANDON

way you're

(watching WALTER hurl money)

Best get in there and collect some of this, Jerry. The
picking, you're gonna need some for a rainy day.

JERRY

that plugged
it lasts.
offended.

Keep talking, sugarmouth. Must feel pretty good to be
in. You got a good streak going. Well enjoy it while
The gambling Gods are a fickle bunch, sooooo easily

BRANDON makes his way through the room, reaches WALTER.

WALTER

businesses
someone please

Here, get you teeth fixed. There might be some other
you can make two mill in one weekend, but tell me,
tell me -- where else are you gonna have this much fun?

BRANDON

How much of that big stack's mine?

WALTER

A one with five zeros behind it.

BRANDON

...A 100 fucking thou? On two million?

WALTER

You're working out of my shop.

BRANDON

I was thinking of ten percent.

WALTER

Really? Is that what you were thinking?

BRANDON

I got you Novian.

WALTER

yourself. I'm Nice job, now don't blow it by getting ahead of looking beyond the money.

BRANDON

only want You can afford to, you're holding it all. C'mon, I what's fair, Walter.

headlock. WALTER smiles. Wraps an arm around. Puts him in a

WALTER

fair is "Fair?" Honey, you don't know what fair is. What's once. not giving you the money. Now I'm only gonna say this

after a If you want something from me more than a gazunheidt sneeze you have to do more than think about it. Or ask for it.

rip it You gotta earn it. You gotta fight for it. You gotta that. That's out of my fucking talons. John Anthony would know with that what he'd do. As a matter of fact, next time you come talking shit, come as John Anthony. 'Cause from now on I'm not to you about money.

from the BRANDON pulls free. Stunned. Seething. MTV pounds TVs, people dancing all around. TONI walks up.

TONI

The big winner. How are you doing?

BRANDON

I'm winning... I'm winning...

music. BRANDON leaves. WALTER pulls her close, moves with the

you more.
something.
the world,
Bahamas with
boat.
you and
Next

WALTER

Dance with me. Close, that's it. I gotta dance with
Listen, I'm thinking of buying a plane. Big one. G-
We can just get on it and go, you and me, anywhere in
any time we want. There's a house for sale in the
a runway right beside it. Comes with its own 50-foot
Two for one. What an investment. Anything happens,
Jules always have it. Let's go down and check it out.
week, just us, barefoot in the sand.

(TONI watching him)

Well say something.

TONI

... Are you gambling again, Walter?

WALTER

What? Oh, c'mon -- hell no.

TONI

Look me in the eye and say it.

WALTER

That

I am not gambling. Not now, not ever. 18 years clean.
shit's over.

TONI

It's never over, Walter. You know that.

WALTER

with truth
working
Huh?

Get a lie detector if you don't believe me. Shoot me
serum. Baby -- we just made two-million dollars. I'm
miracles here. Now can I enjoy a dance with my wife?

something to kill

I swear, it's a shame you can't drink, we need
that bug up your ass.

TONI smiles. WALTER holds her close, kisses her and --

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

BRANDON'S Mercedes speeds into the city.

INT. MANHATTAN STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

booth with
the Million
whispers
the hand

Big breasts, G-strings, testosterone. BRANDON in a
a topless BLACK GIRL. We can see from his moves it's
Dollar Man talking. Drinking Dom. Flashing cash. He
something to her. She reaches for her top as he grabs
of her topless FRIEND and --

INT. STRIP CLUB - PRIVATE BACK ROOM - NIGHT

bedroom.
to a
wad of
the air
on the
sticking to
skin --

DARKNESS. A light goes on, illuminates a cave-like
MUSIC from the club rumbles through the space, reduced
driving bass beat. The ASIAN GIRL pulls an outrageous
cash from BRANDON'S pocket, tosses it confetti-like in
as -- BRANDON, the ASIAN GIRL and the BLACK GIRL fall
gold lame sheets. Clothes are peeled off, money
their bodies, GIRLS clawing the cash from BRANDON'S

Black girl

(kissing his neck, hands roving)

that?

What's it feel like to do what you do? To win like

BRANDON flips her over, leans in from behind.

BRANDON

numbers, very
shift, a plan
and teams

It's just like sex. You start by massaging the
relaxed,
getting a feel, see how they move. Then there's a
forms and you connect to your teams.
(the GIRL moans, reacting to something unseen)
Sunday's like penetration and the games have started
are scoring and
you're inside and you're doing it and
it's doing you, feeling every shift,
every score, every trickle of sweat --
the giving, taking, the long, the short,
excitement growing bigger and bigger--
(BRANDON cupping her breasts)

you, all
and over
orgasm.

And it's not an idea or part of you anymore -- it is
of you -- and the crowd's roaring and the clock's
ticking and you know everything except
how it'll end and and then you've won -- over and over
and it's like one, big, huge, insane, weekend-long

FRIEND

(totally turned on, kissing him)

Nice job description.

climbing on
volume and--

BRANDON presses her below FRAME, naked ASIAN GIRL
top as the sound of APPLAUSE is heard, building in

INT. BROWNSTONE SALESROOM - DAY

passes
Anthony who's
kissing the

25 SALESMEN stand on their desks, clapping, as BRANDON
through on the way to his office. Only it's John
strutting through the room, high-fiving SALESMEN,
GIRLS, a tanned, tailored, magnetic presence and --

INT. BROWNSTONE - BRANDON'S OFFICE - MORNING

the sales

WALTER waits within, standing at the window overlooking
room as BRANDON enters.

WALTER

Know what time it is?

BRANDON

(glance at his watch)

Yeah, it's--

WALTER

out all

--Wrong. It's time to press, my friend. We're yanking
the stops. When you're winning -- you press.

clubs.

BRANDON rummaging a closet, produces a set of golf

WALTER

What are you doing?

BRANDON

Howell

I have a 10:30 tee time at Wingfoot with a client, that
guy. Don't call me unless the lines change.

WALTER

fielding

The salmon are running! You're staying right here and
calls. You're not going off to play golf and have fun.

BRANDON

Fun? Senor, you have obviously never played Wingfoot.

WALTER

weekend.

Stop screwing around, you got a lot to do before this

telling you
I'll make

BRANDON
I'm not asking you if I can leave, Walter -- I'm
that's how it is, understood? You want my picks, hell
'em now.

form.

BRANDON sits, starts filling out the week's betting

you have

WALTER
Whoa -- hold on -- slow down -- today's only Tuesday,
all week.

BRANDON
I don't need it.

neighborhood

WALTER
Hey -- we're gonna be advising somewhere in the
of 20 million dollars this week.

BRANDON
Nice neighborhood.

analysis?

WALTER
You're really gonna make your picks now? No study? No
Just like that?

picks, I might

BRANDON
I'm in the zone, Walter. Locked in. You want my
as well do it now!

touchdowns!
out!

Washington at Miami giving 8, Washington!
Saint Louis at K.C. getting 12 -- K.C. by three
Pittsburgh at Philly giving 3 -- Philly, another blow

(handing WALTER the finished form)

Brandon con'd

There they are, unless you want next weekend's picks
too. You're

welcome to join me, Walter, it's a beautiful track.

WALTER

... Okay, fine. Take a break. Go play golf. We'll
put the picks on ice and look 'em over tomorrow.

BRANDON

(walking out)

I won't be in tomorrow.

WALTER

Then the next day!

But BRANDON'S gone. WALTER considers what's just
occured, regards the finished betting form. He dons his glasses and
begin examining BRANDON'S picks and --

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BROWNSTONE - DAY

BRANDON loads his golf clubs in the Mercedes, spies
TONI coming down the front steps.

BRANDON

Where're you headed?

TONI

Some of us have to work.

BRANDON

Come on, get in. I'll give you a lift.

ANGLE ON -- upper brownstone window. WALTER looks
down. Watches TONI'S legs swing into BRANDON'S sports car and --

INT. MOVING MERCEDES - DAY

BRANDON speeds fast down a street. Uncomfortable beat.

BRANDON

Some ride, huh? Feel that? Feel that?

TONI

Slow down, Brandon.

BRANDON

Why? This car was made to go fast.

TONI

Not with me in it.

BRANDON

C'mon, Toni, loosen up.

(goosing the gas, laughing)

or running
mind, which

Let me ask you something. When you're not at the shop,
Julia to play dates or keeping Walter from losing his
I know is a full-time job,
what do you do for you, Toni?

TONI

I stay busy.

BRANDON

That's not what I asked.

TONI

Yes it is.

BRANDON

What do you do for you, Toni, for yourself.

TONI

and went
20 years
junkie. I
track,

"What do I do for myself?" If you drove past my salon
two blocks down Prospect Street you would have found me
ago with a needle in my arm. I was a 5-bag a day
would have sold Julia to get high. Keeping it all on
that's what I do for myself.

BRANDON

cashed

That's not living, Toni. That's just maintaining. You
in.

TONI

perfection here?

14 and

BRANDON

Well, nobody's perfect... except me last weekend going
0.

BRANDON pulls up outside her shop. TONI regards him.

TONI

Yeah, that's living.

BRANDON

Hell yeah. You oughta try it some time.

TONI

(stepping from the car)

Thanks for the ride, John...

TONI enters her shop and --

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

starting.

Eight football games are winding down, another four

CHRIS

Favor one of the TV SCREENS. A network sports update.

BERMAN motor-mouthing a one-minute list of results.

CHRIS BERMAN

Saint

-- Big loss for Washington, going down 24-12 in Miami.

Philly

Louis upsets K.C., 34-14. And another Sunday surprise,

trounces Pittsburgh, 23-10.

runs down

CHRIS BERMAN continues with the scores as -- a PENCIL

-- loss

BRANDON'S betting sheet -- checking off results -- loss

suddenly snaps

-- loss -- loss -- loss -- the pencil pauses --

stares at

from the pressure of the person's hand and -- WALTER

obvious

BRANDON, seated on the sofa, watching the tvs. It's

they're getting killed.

BRANDON

I'm gonna go work out.

WALTER

every
remote control
BRANDON
clock reads
holds it

Sit down! You're watching every game! Every second of minute of every game! Don't even think of leaving!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

remote control
BRANDON
clock reads
holds it

All but one tv is dark. The last game ends and a suddenly shatters the screen. WALTER paces the office. still on the sofa. No one else in the room. A wall clock reads 12:19 AM. WALTER picks up BRANDON'S betting sheet, like a dead fish.

WALTER

Sunday's
starting QBs

... How do you go 3 and 11? Wanna know how -- you make picks on Tuesday! It rained in Cincinatti! Two didn't play! You're a handicapper, not a psychic!

BRANDON

There's still Monday night and the parlay.

WALTER

Fuck Monday night! Fuck the parlay!
You were pissed at me, right? The commission thing?

BRANDON

I don't know.

WALTER

money thing.
giving
game?
gonna double

You fucked with me, right? Joke's on me, right? The Okay, I think we're on dangerous ground here but I'm you a bump, 10 percent. Now what about Monday night's You want to look over that pick? Because everyone's down to climb out of the fucking hole you put 'em in.

BRANDON

Monday night's fine.

WALTER

You'd bet your mother's house on it?

BRANDON

I don't bet.

WALTER

If you did?

BRANDON

I like the pick, Walter.

WALTER

On your mother's house or not?

BRANDON

With my mother in it.

INT. UPPER EAST SIDE BAR - NIGHT

Up-scale. BRANDON sits at the end of the rail, empty glasses lined before him, watching a wall TV with the sound off. Monday Night Football's on. His glazed expression suggests it's been a long three hours. PATRONS around him socialize, laugh, enjoy the bar's oasis-like vibe. But for BRANDON, it's just him and the game as -- a GIRL approaches, big smile.

GIRL

Oh my God -- Brandon!

BRANDON glances up, quickly goes back to watching the game.

Girl

Oh come on, I know you remember -- two weeks ago, Aqua Heather.

-- I'm

BRANDON

(eyes glued to the game)

Uh-huh.

Heather

the corner. This is like such a coincidence. I live right around

This is my neighborhood bar.

She sits beside him, signals the bartender.

Heather

Apple martini.

(back to BRANDON)

weekend, really So listen, my office is renting out a loft this
music, fun group, it's gonna be a big blow-out, a PR thing --
I'd really open bar. Wednesday night, I want you to come, I mean
love to hook up.

seconds. BRANDON POV BRANDON -- flurry of action on the TV. Final
lasered on the screen.

HEATHER

(leaning in, laughing)

Earth to Brandon, you're blowing it.

drink -- The BARTENDER steps in front of the TV to deliver her
action BRANDON jumps from his seat so he can see -- flurry of
flashes and-- on the screen -- the game ends -- the final score

BRANDON

(pounding the bar)

FUCK!

HEATHER taken aback, pulls away.

BRANDON

Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck!!!

in his HEATHER quickly leaves. Other PATRONS react. BRANDON

throws
His beeper
the sweat
BRANDON'S

own world of pain. BARTENDER eyeing him now. BRANDON
down the rest of his drink, trying to steady himself.
suddenly sounds. He looks and --
WALTER'S NAME scrolls across the screen. BRANDON wipes
from his brow. Mind racing. Trying to understand.
cell phone rings. He checks the number, picks up --

BRANDON

York,
Tonight's game?
Denny, I
you were
Don't say
all back
Friday with
talk to
and --

Denny! Hey -- yeah, I'm in a bar.... Of course in New
I own this town. What's going on -- you okay?...
You took my picks? How much?...
All of it? That was for your college you dumb ass!
gave you one game -- goddamn it you should have told me
following my picks!
(pacing the rail)
All right, listen. Does Mom know?... Okay, good.
anything. I've got next weekend wired. I'll win it
for you and more. Understand? Now I'll call you
who to take. It's all gonna work out. I gotta go,
you later.

BRANDON hangs up. Straightens. Strides out of the bar

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

sports pages
Power

BRANDON'S a man absorbed. The office is filled with
from every newspaper in the country. Injury reports.
ratings. BRANDON studying everything and --

QUICK CUTS

RECEIVERS
BACKS
slammed from
by inches
sail through
scoreboards

-- A dozen rapid-fire kick-offs fill the SCREEN --
catch passes, OTHERS drop them spectacularly -- RUNNING
brilliantly juke tackles, score -- QUARTERBACKS are
behind, stripped of the ball -- kicks miss goal posts
-- PLAYERS are carried off on stretchers -- footballs
RECEIVERS'S hands, their fingers clawing empty air --
blink outcomes, stadium lights flare and --

EXT. CHELSEA PIERS - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

River.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE -- TOP TIER - NIGHT

another and

BRANDON smacks one to the 250 sign, about to hit
--

is that

WALTER
Helluva swing. Great game. Sport of kings, right? Or
horse racing?

BRANDON
What are you doing here?

WALTER
Southie told me where you were.

BRANDON
I had to get out. Clear my head.

(teeing one up)

Well talk to me. How'd we do?

WALTER
You haven't seen the scores?

BRANDON

get the

Nope. That's how I wanted it. Just make the picks and results later.

WALTER

Highest sales volume ever. Take a guess.

BRANDON

I think we kicked ass.

WALTER

It was amazing.

BRANDON

I told you. Last week was nothing.

BRANDON smacks a drive, watches it soar --

WALTER

today!

You're right, nothing compared to how much we lost

BRANDON

... What'd I go?

WALTER

happened here

I have an idea. I give you a few glimpses of what today and you take a stab.

BRANDON

Just give me the numbers, Walter.

WALTER

Grown

You don't like that game. Too bad. Woulda been fun.

background.

men crying on the phone. Wives screaming in the

pressure!

Three salespeople quit 'cause they couldn't take the

BRANDON

Fuck!

WALTER

cover it.

No. When you lose 10 out of 12, fuck doesn't quite

Fucking

What would be more appropriate is something like "Holy Shit!" Or "My Fucking God." Or "Jesus Fucking Christ!"

BRANDON

Enough. I get the idea, Walter.

WALTER

weekend
phone
him --
You're right. I mean 2 for 12 on our biggest volume
-- what the hell's left to say? Except maybe keep the
number and switch it over to a fucking suicide hotline!
BRANDON hefts the golf bag, walks away. Yelling after

WALTER

in all
you're
avoid a lot
Tomorrow morning, Brandon! Bright and early! We start
over again! No getting off! I'm gonna ride you until
more sick of me than losing! Turn it around and we
of pain!

Omit

OMIT

Omit

Omit

EXT. BROOKLYN PARK - EARLY MORNING

BRANDON riding
flash
--BRANDON
Gloomy fog. A few PEOPLE heading home from work.
his bike, pedaling fast when a MAN suddenly steps out,
of something in his hand, jamming it in the spokes and
wipes out, over the handlebars -- hard to the ground --

BRANDON

Son of a bitch... What the fuck--

BODYGUARD

Mr. Novian wants to see you. Now.

BRANDON

(seeing a gun in his waistband)

... Tell him to call.

BODYGUARD

You tell him.

BRANDON looks, sees NOVIAN nearby.

NOVIAN

I didn't recognize you without the suit, John.

BRANDON

want to
This is my time off. It's how I clear my head. You
talk, pick a time.

NOVIAN

mill, you
Or should I call you Brandon? Someone costs you 18
do some research.

you're from.
Where your family lives. Hell, I just came from
Vegas. Your
Mom, sweet lady... dealt me three blackjacks in a row.

(stepping close)

Where's the cocky motherfucker who came to my house?

BRANDON

I'm leaving.

The BODYGUARD grabs his arm. Iron grip.

NOVIAN

getting
Feel that? I hate the cold. Winter's coming. Water's
rough.

BRANDON

picks, use
What the fuck is this about? If you don't like my
someone else.

NOVIAN

And I
apology.
Oh, I'm not using you again. That's already decided.
can't get my money back. It's gone. No, I came for an

around. The BODYGUARD holds him tight. Light fading. No one

NOVIAN

to make Look me in the eye and say you're sorry. Say it so as
me believe you mean it.

Cold gust. NOVIAN closes the distance between them.

BRANDON

You flew to New York for--

NOVIAN

--That's right.

BRANDON

... I'm sorry.

NOVIAN

I don't accept it. Not good enough. Try again.

BRANDON

am. I'm I don't know what you want me to say. I'm sorry. I
very sorry.

NOVIAN

Pathetic.

BRANDON

I am very, very sorry. That's a lot of money.

NOVIAN

Not even close.

BRANDON

I'm sorry!

NOVIAN

satisfaction somehow This isn't going to work. I'll have to get
else.

BRANDON

Look, I'm not it -- I...

of a NOVIAN inches from BRANDON. Unbuttons his coat. Sound
his fly. zipper. BRANDON glances down, sees Novian reach into

close.
going and--

BRANDON jumps. The BODYGUARD holds him. NOVIAN comes

BRANDON struggles, very unsure where this might be

heard --

BRANDON'S

men walk

He squirms -- enduring something -- trickling water

NOVIAN staring right at BRANDON -- finishes pissing on

leg. NOVIAN motions his BODYGUARD to let go and the

off. BRANDON stands there. Alone in the gloom and --

INT. STUDIO PRODUCTION SET - NIGHT

for the

leans over.

WALTER, BRANDON, JERRY and CHUCK at the desk, waiting

weekly taping to start. WALTER jots notes. JERRY

with.

JERRY

I scored you the new mikes, Walter. No wires to mess

What do you think?

WALTER

I'm busy.

strong

JERRY

Listen, I think I should lead off. I have some really

stuff.

WALTER

You got a good hole, Jerry. Stay in it.

feeling it.

JERRY

C'mon, I went 8 for 12 last weekend. I'm hot. I'm

fumes.

WALTER doesn't respond, continues working. JERRY

TECHNICIAN

60 seconds.

JERRY

What am I, wood?

WALTER

it. You got one good weekend under your belt, don't push

JERRY

industry. One weekend? The Sykes System revolutionized this

ANTHONY) (pulling a newspaper, showing a full-page ad for JOHN

Explain something to me, where's my fucking ad?

WALTER

Take a hike.

JERRY

What?

WALTER

You heard me. You're fired. Goodbye.

JERRY

I'm not fired, you need me more than ever.

WALTER

Beat it, you cut-rate parasite!

JERRY

of his In six years my worst weekend was never as bad as any
last three weeks!

WALTER

Get out! You don't work for me anymore!

JERRY

it's me, What the hell are you doing, Walter? C'mon, man --
Jerry. These other guys come and go.

WALTER

'cause (pointing at BRANDON)
Not this one! That's true talent! I'm firing your ass
you don't see it and I can't explain it to you!

JERRY

Think what you're fucking doing!

WALTER

I am! You couldn't pick your fucking nose without a computer!
You're small! You belong in a can! Show some self-respect!
It's over, Jerry -- leave!

Beat. BRANDON watches as JERRY gathers his things, walks off.

WALTER

... Fuck him where he flosses. Asshole doesn't understand I'm building an empire around you. Finish the countdown, we got a big weekend to get to! Let's go, chop chop!

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A BUDWEISER COMMERCIAL fills FRAME --

peeking
scores
phone rings.
Fully dressed.
cell,
sinks
move. Another
knock and --

PULL BACK TO SHOW -- BRANDON in bed, under the covers, at the tv over a remote. The sports wrap-up comes on, flashing on the screen. No clue how he did until his
Then his cell vibrates. BRANDON gets out of bed.
Buries the phone under the mattress. He turns off the
but within seconds it starts vibrating again. BRANDON
into a corner. Knock at the door. BRANDON doesn't
knock and --

Intercut -- toni in the hall, talking through the door

TONI

It's me, Brandon. Can I come in?

BRANDON

No. It's not a good time. What do you need?

TONI

I need to talk to you, it's important.

BRANDON lost, doesn't answer.

TONI

You need to get out, Brandon. You need to go.

BRANDON

back on

I gotta pick a winner is what I gotta do. I gotta get track.

TONI

be enough
ground.

It won't matter. You could go 100-and-0 and it won't -- it'll never be enough. He'll ride you into the

BRANDON

I gotta figure this out.

TONI

Please, Brandon.

BRANDON

I'll figure it out...

spent and--

TONI leans her head against the door, exasperated,

EXT. UPPER EAST SIDE - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

BRANDON, suit and tie, stands in the lobby of an apartment high-rise, nearby. speaks on a house phone. An unsmiling DOORMAN watches

BRANDON VOICEOVER

got your
thought I'd

Alex, it's Brandon. Hey, it's been awhile but I never number that night. I was in the neighborhood so I take a chance and stop by.

INT. LUXURY HIGH-RISE APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY - NIGHT

wait. ALEX
in the
friendly as she

The DOORMAN stands at the entrance, watches BRANDON
appears, beautiful as the night BRANDON picked her up
restaurant. Her demeanor, however, is far from
exits the elevator.

BRANDON

Man, you got a Doberman for a doorman.

ALEX

What are you doing here?

BRANDON

couple of killer
where we

I came by to take you out for a late dinner and a
bottles of wine. C'mon. We'll go back to that place
met.

ALEX

Are you out of your fucking mind?

(stepping close for emphasis)

like creeps

I live in this building, asshole. It's home. I don't
coming around unannounced. Lurking around outside.

BRANDON

night?

What the hell's gotten into you? What about that

ALEX

again.

Let me make this real clear so this shit doesn't happen

you meant

You mean nothing to me. Oh wait, I take that back --
5000 bucks. Your friend set it up.

(already heading back inside)

Don't fucking bother me again.

EXT. MANHATTAN - DAWN

Pale sunrise over the East River.

INT. SALES ROOM - DAWN

room. BRANDON, suit and tie, walks through the silent, empty

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAWN

His phone BRANDON sits at his desk. Staring out at the city.
rings. Again. Again. Finally pressing speaker phone
--

BRANDON

Hello.

Intercut - amir in payphone beside N.J. Turnpike - dawn

Amir

(dishevelled, distraught)

I'm wiped out, John...

BRANDON

Amir?

Amir

My business... My house... My credit...

BRANDON

buddy No, now listen to me -- we got a big weekend coming up,
--

AMIR

this is Still you talk like this. Who the fuck are you, like
Sunday when some kind of game. I was betting a few thousand a
time with I called you. You pushed me. Every call. All the
going to get your talk... I lost \$380,000 this weekend... I was
married... I had a life...

BRANDON staring at the phone, barely holding it together, sees TAMMY standing there -- holding the day's newspapers, hearing the conversation on speaker.

AMIR

No words now, huh? No more money to squeeze so you shut up.
How do you fucking live with yourself?

Click. Amir hangs up. Crushing beat. TAMMY staring at him.

BRANDON

What?

(face hardening)

Fuck him if he can't take a joke.

BRANDON
a newspaper
ad for
Million Dollar
TAMMY puts the day's newspapers on his desk, leaves.
glances down, something catches his eye. BRANDON pulls from the pile -- finds himself staring at a full-page JOHN ANTHONY. Big smile. Copy advertising "The Man!" and --

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

BRANDON paces the dim space. Sits on the bench press. Leans back on the board. He stares up at the weights. Moves the weight pin to 250... and slowly starts to lift. One rep. Two. Three. Four. A bad of sweat forms. BRANDON throws off the jacket. Pulls off the tie. Removes his shirt and shoes. He resumes lifting, grim determination -- the weights rising over and over and over -- faster and faster and --

INT. WALTER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

office, bursts
BRANDON, t-shirt and sweats, approaches WALTER'S
through the door --

BRANDON

I know what the problem is!

of money
BRANDON freezes. WALTER watches two MEN unload stacks
from a briefcase, pile them on his desk.

BRANDON

I'll come back later.

WALTER

through?
No! C'mon in. We're done here. Right fellas? All

You want a bite before you go? Something to drink?

The two MEN leave. WALTER lights a cigarette.

BRANDON

Who were they?

WALTER

can shoot
We need a bat light or something, you know a signal I
up at the

Walter con'd

clouds and no matter where you are you

would work.
can look up and you'll know I need you. Maybe that

times.
'Cause last night I must've beeped you a hundred

BRANDON

Who were they?

WALTER

someone go
They're from the Salvation Army. How the hell does
better!
1-for-8? A fucking monkey tossing darts could do

BRANDON

What's with the money, Walter?

WALTER

1-for-fucking-8!

(coming around the desk)

I have a plan. From now on we take your picks and reverse everything!

Like a Twilight Zone episode where everything's the opposite!

You say black we go white! A is B! Lose becomes win!

BRANDON

(staring at the pile of cash)

How much is that?

WALTER

(sweeping the pile to the floor)

How much is what? Oh, that -- 275,000 dollars!

BRANDON

What happened to the two mill, all the other money?

WALTER

up. The
come around.
turn on
all in!
know? I
and to
out of
you see

I was carrying twice that in red ink before you showed last few weeks I thought keep the pressure off. He'll

Climb out on his own. Now I figure fuck it! Time to the lights! Let him see the toilet he's drowning us

Maybe that'll shake him up! So what do you want to

got three mortgages on this house, I'm gambling again cover my losses I just got a loan from a guy who works a bar on a 106th and Broadway! All this -- everything around you --

is smoke and mirrors! I shoulda been a magician!

WALTER CON'D

... What'd you say when you came in? You were in a good mood

something. when you walked through the door and you said

BRANDON

You're betting my picks?

WALTER

could
a hundred
One decent
weekend!

You went 82 and 11! You were picking 80 percent -- how
I fucking not!? Trouble is I bet heavy after you went
percent and rode you right into the fucking toilet!
weekend and I would have been set for life! One decent

BRANDON stares at him, stunned.

WALTER

with a
big smile and said, "I know what the problem is!"

"I know what the problem is!" That's it! You came in

BRANDON

played sports.
with him
Anthony. But

... I'm Brandon Lang, Walter. Brandon's the one who
Brandon's the one who can pick games. I lost touch
-- myself. It wasn't an act, man. I became John
he's not me. If I go back to being Brandon--

WALTER

like Brandon!
suits! It's
something you
into a
games
all we
Brandon magic,
Monday

--You can pick again! Of course!
All you gotta do is go back to being Brandon! Talk
Eat like Brandon! Forget John Anthony! Burn the
all my fault. I see that now. I pushed you into
weren't. I took the golden goose and tried to turn it
duck. We're winding down the season. There's only two
this weekend. Two winners and two over/unders. That's
need. You crunch the numbers, sprinkle in a little
we get the sales people burning up the phones and come

Huh? Let's we go four for four going into the big game! Right?
get

something to eat! Go to Smith and Wo's!

BRANDON

No thanks. I'll stay here. Eat light.

WALTER

(kneeling down, stacking the cash)

you to go The Brandon thing! What am I thinking trying to get
and jelly? out? What would Brandon eat for lunch? Peanut butter

Ramen noodles? What?

BRANDON

(on the floor, helping him)

I'll get something.

WALTER

Clothes? Porno You want anything shipped from home? Your bed?
collection?

BRANDON

No, I'm fine.

WALTER

Blow job?

BRANDON

Thanks anyway. Maybe later...

WALTER

Because it's important.

BRANDON

Pressure doesn't help.

WALTER

Two little God forgive me, you're an artist. I fucked with that.
need. You winners and a couple of over/unders. That's all we
for Brandon. could phone it in. Two's nothing. Not for you. Not

Right, Brandon? Isn't that right?

BRANDON stands. Looks down at WALTER, unable to hide the desperation behind his frozen smile and --

MONTAGE OF BRANDON WORKING THROUGH THE WEEK

--BRANDON closes the blinds in his office, blocks the view --BRANDON works out, watching ESPN -- the SALES STAFF sit idle at their desks, playing cards -- a pick sheet fills FRAME, shows New York versus Atlanta, Tennessee versus Kansas City and an over/under beneath each game -- WALTER waits in the SALES ROOM, edgy, pacing when BRANDON emerges holding the sheet -- all eyes on him -- WALTER approaches --

WALTER

These are the winners?

BRANDON

That's who I like.

WALTER

Brandon made these picks?

BRANDON

You're looking at him.

WALTER

(regarding the picks, to the room)

New York and the under, Tennessee and the under! Sell 'em hard!

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - DAY

SALES STAFF crowd into the room. WALTER and BRANDON sit side-by-side.

JULIA
Seconds before kickoff of the New York/Atlanta game. Julia climbs into WALTER'S lap, holding her puppy.

Julia

Can I watch, daddy?

WALTER

Sure, Angel. I need you to root for me.

(pointing at ATLANTA)

New
root for
points total.

They're the bad guys. Atlanta. We want the blue team.
York. They have to win by more than five points. And
a low score. Both teams have to make less than 42
New York and under 42 points.

JULIA

Why do we like the blue team?

WALTER

Because Brandon likes them.

holding up

JULIA looks at BRANDON, smiles. BRANDON'S barely
here, forces himself to find a smile in return.

RECEIVER
from the
reacting
next.

THE TV FILLS FRAME. New York kicks off. An Atlanta
takes it back for a 60 yard return. We start cutting
game to BRANDON, to WALTER, the SALESPEOPLE, JULIA, all
as the betting Gods raise hopes one play, dash them the

Atlanta
crowds the
left.

Play after play. Tide going for New York one minute,
the next. Tension in the room building. Everyone
TVs as New York defends a 10 point lead with a minute
37 points on the board. Only an Atlanta TD can lose

the two
fives as
yard loss.

bets and they're 80 yards from scoring. A few high
Atlanta fumbles on a run, recover the ball for a five

WALTER excited,

Backed up to their own end zone. Two plays left.
things going their way and --

final
out as

BRANDON starting to breath again and -- Atlanta tries a
hail mary, ball coming down into a crowd -- time runs

pulls it down
freezes --
bastard
in for
they've
nobody speaks
first and
on the
drifting
these
just staring

a New York PLAYER swats it and an Atlanta RECEIVER
-- running hard -- open to the end zone -- the room
a New York PLAYER grabs hold -- trying to bring him the
down but the Atlanta RUNNER is strong and just makes it
the score -- game over -- and Atlanta hasn't won but
killed the point spread and pushed the game over --
-- the second game comes on right on the heels of the
now Tennessee is kicking off to Kansas City and we're
roller coaster all over again -- SALES PEOPLE start
from the room and they've pushed their clients huge on
games and their cell phones are ringing and WALTER'S
at the screens and BRANDON'S dying and --

DISSOLVE TO

INT. WALTER'S OFFICE - LATER - NIGHT

ANNOUNCERS
Well over
lost.

WALTER and BRANDON alone in the room. Sound of the
as Atlanta get trounced by Denver. Not even close.
42 total points scored. The game ends. All four bets
A commercial comes on. Horrible stillness.

BRANDON

...I'm finished. I'm done.

WALTER

That's great.

BRANDON

night. I
can't eat.

WALTER

this because
You're not gonna sit there and tell me you're ending
you have a little indigestion or some insomnia.

BRANDON

It's a lot more than that.

WALTER

I made it very clear before we started what the stakes were.

BRANDON

Walter, it's over. What use could John Anthony be to you now?

Only an idiot would follow him after the streak I've been on.

WALTER

Bettors will Wrong! Hot streaks go cold, cold streaks go hot. climb back aboard.

WALTER CON'D

They know you! And when your luck turns they'll remember you went 80 percent for half the season! We'll make it all back on the last game and by next year they'll forget everything.

BRANDON

Who said anything about next year?

WALTER

Sports betting's year-round.

BRANDON

I'm not doing this next year.

WALTER

You made a career choice! I bankrolled it!

TONI VO

Let him go, Walter.

WALTER and BRANDON turn, see TONI at the door.

WALTER

Of course you stick up for him!

TONI

Meaning what?

WALTER

Who's side are you on?

TONI

I didn't realize I had to choose.

WALTER

(to BRANDON)

strike out
You're
but gets
about you
metaphysical,
Besides, we

Look, you got a magnificent gift. Own that. So you
sometimes, big deal, you're swinging for the fences.
a champion, Brandon. A champion goes down 186 times
up 187. I'm not letting you stay down. This isn't
or me or Toni, this transcends that -- this is
this is cosmic, this is eternal -- this is God...
have a contract.

BRANDON

Bullshit!

TONI

You can't own someone, Walter.

WALTER

seen!
around him,
be goddamned
with him!
is between

I created the hottest sports tout this country's ever
I plugged him, took out full page ads, built a show
hooked him up with every major client I have and I will
if he's going to walk out the door and take all that
Why the hell am I even explaining this to you! This
me and him! Get out!

BRANDON

Don't talk to her like that.

WALTER

talking

I need you to tell me how to talk to my wife? When I'm
you'll shut your fucking toilet!

TONI

(to BRANDON)

Leave.

INT. WALTER AND TONI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BRANDON comes down the hall. TONI and WALTER heard yelling through the office door. BRANDON hesitates, walks out and --

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dim darkness. A distant siren bleeds in as --

WALTER'S VOICE

Brandon... Brandon.

BRANDON'S POV. His eyes open. WALTER'S face fills FRAME.

WALTER

Wake up.

BRANDON

What time is it?

WALTER

Five in the morning. Listen, I gotta fly to Vegas to meet with some clients. Hand holding thing. Keep 'em on board for the final game. Because you can do this thing, Brandon. End of the season's the perfect place to turn this streak around. I'll be back to you out to dinner. Get you back in the groove. 9:30. Nobu. Gotta catch my flight. See you tonight. Look sharp. We're turning it around.

WALTER backs out, kills the lights. Darkness returns and --

INT. NOBU - NIGHT

evening dress,
BRANDON alone at a table, sipping a sake when TONI,
sits next to him.

BRANDON

Hey, I didn't know you were coming.

TONI

Asked if
Walter was delayed, he's coming back in the morning.
I'd fill in.

BRANDON

(processing this)

That's funny, he didn't call me. You look great.

TONI silent.

BRANDON

You okay?

TONI

beautiful.
Julia did her ballet recital today. God she was

BRANDON

She is.

TONI

... He's betting again.

BRANDON regards her.

TONI

just...
I can't believe I'm here again. I saw it coming. I
I just couldn't stop it.

BRANDON

Nobody could.

TONI

He won't stop on his own. He can't.

BRANDON

I gotta win one more game.

TONI

You can't fix this, Brandon.

BRANDON

After Sunday's game I'm taking off...

EXT. BROWNSTONE STEPS - NIGHT

looks around
regard

A cab pulls up. BRANDON and TONI emerge. BRANDON as they start up the steps. Both reach for their keys, one another.

BRANDON

It's still early. Come in for a while.

TONI

I don't think so.

suddenly
grows in
by. Things

She leans in to kiss him on the cheek and -- BRANDON shifts. Their lips meet. A casual goodbye suddenly intensity as neither tries to part. Seconds ticking getting heated. TONI tries to pull away.

TONI

Brandon--

the door.
into his

BRANDON comes close, whispers something. He unlocks She hesitates before BRANDON takes her hand, leads her dark apartment and --

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - SAME TIME

cables of
briefly by the
at the

A cold wind blows off the river. Whips through the the span. A match flares. WALTER'S face is lit flame. He stands on the bridge walkway, looking down brownstone and --

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. WALTER AND TONI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gray, winter day. View of a snow-covered window sill -

-

INT. WALTER AND TONI'S APARTMENT - DAY

video coming
removing
WALTER'S FACE fills a shaky HOME VIDEO VIEWFINDER,
close to show WALTER opening a book-size present --
a beautifully framed photo of TONI and JULIA.

WALTER

Look at that. With the leaves and all. This goes on
my desk.

blazing.
Quick PAN to TONI -- sitting near the fireplace, fire

TONI

Happy anniversary.

KNOCK at the door --

JULIA vo

I'll get it.

JULIA
JULIA hands the CAMERA to WALTER. VIDEO CAMERA view of
and the puppy running to the door, opening it and --

JULIA

Brandon!

BRANDON

Hey darlin'.

Walter vo

celebration.
There he is. C'mon in. We're having a little
Toni and I were married 12 years ago today.

BRANDON

Congratulations, I didn't know.

WALTER vo

Sit down. I want you to be part of this.

Okay angel, give Mommy my gift.

WALTER aims the CAMERA as JULIA hands TONI a small gift
box.

TONI opens it, reveals a set of very expensive
earrings.

Toni

Walter...

WALTER vo

Relax, I had some saved. Put 'em on, lemme see.

TONI puts the earrings on.

Walter vo

Beautiful. God I got good taste.

TONI stares into the CAMERA as WALTER PANS to BRANDON -
-

WALTER vo

I saw something else, I couldn't help myself. Here,
Brandon -- for you.

WALTER hands BRANDON a small black case. BRANDON
unsure, looks at TONI, opens it -- produces a very expensive watch.

WALTER vo

It's a Chopard. Designed for car racing. Guy won six
times at LeMans wearing it. Put it on, maybe you'll
start winning.

BRANDON

I can't take this.

WALTER vo

Why not?

BRANDON

It's too much.

WALTER vo

For what? You're family, Brandon. We all love each other, right?

Toni, but

I'm like a father, you're like my son -- gee, sorry

I guess that makes you his mother.

WALTER PANS to TONI, staring at the fire. Strained silence.

WALTER vo

What? Somebody fart or something?

TONI starts taking off the earrings.

WALTER vo

Leave 'em on.

TONI

They're for evening.

WALTER vo

Good, wear 'em to bed tonight.

(VIDEO CAMERA back on BRANDON)

Who do you think'll win the big game?

BRANDON

Turn it off.

WALTER/still taping

break it

Enjoy yourself.

Better yet, don't say anything. Surprise me. We'll

when we do the live show. Take your time, Brandon.

Give Walter a smile.

WALTER ZOOMS IN -- BRANDON staring back at us and --

EXT. TIMES SQUARE NEWS STAND - DAY

BRANDON loads up on newspapers and sports magazines and --

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - DAY

BRANDON surrounded by a sea of sports pages, commentary, ratings.

He looks up at a blaring TV and --

THE TV FILLS FRAME -- TIME CUT as various sports shows come on back-to-back -- each providing a wealth of competing Superbowl predictions and analysis.

CAMERA TIGHTENS ON THE SCREEN AND WE SEE, for every hopped-up SPORTSCASTER who picks Denver, an equally assured COUNTERPART chooses New York. One after another. No consensus at all. Airwaves awash in past-season stats -- regular season stats -- post-season stats -- all of it blending into an overwhelming, mind-numbing, jarring blather of pure disagreement and --

INT. TV PRODUCTION STUDIO BATHROOM - NIGHT

BRANDON, suit and tie, splashes water on his face, stares at himself in the mirror. He pulls reams of stats and newspaper reports from his pocket, regards the Superbowl pick sheet. Blank space for the winner. Blank space for the over/under. BRANDON fumbling with his sheets of data, desperately searching for an answer when he suddenly hurls it all in the trash. Kicks the

can. Kicks it again.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE

60 seconds till we go live, Mr. Anthony!

crumpled

BRANDON looks over. The unfinished pick sheet lies
by the toilet. He smooths it. Pulls a coin.

BRANDON

Heads, New York. Tails Denver.

the box.

He flips the coin. Palms it. Heads. BRANDON checks

BRANDON

Heads, over. Tails, under.

watches it

BRANDON flips again, lets the coin hit the floor,
spin, slowly come to a stop, drop to its side and --

INT. TV PRODUCTION STUDIO - NIGHT

own world,
pick sheet

BRANDON sits at the set. Looks over at CHUCK, in his
working something from his teeth. BRANDON Slides the
to WALTER.

TECHNICIAN

Ten seconds!

BRANDON

Wanna know about the picks?

WALTER

what should

New York minus the two-and-a-half points and the over,
I know?

BRANDON

I flipped a coin to decide.

TECHNICIAN

Five, four, three, two, one --

WALTER

Anthony's
Let me say
thinking
history
I'm about
Anthony's picks
bear and
free
service
What's that
bookie. You
Millenium!
Anthony!

Hello everybody and welcome to the big weekend! John
just given me tremendous news about his assessment!
to all of you who've used our service and those of you
of using it for the first time -- never before in the
of this industry has an offer been made like the one
to present to you now! I am so confident of John
for this Sunday, so sure of the skills he's brought to
so anxious to get you on the phone and dialing the toll
number on your screen that for the first time in sports
history I will guarantee our picks this weekend!
mean? Tell us how much you're betting with your
lose, we cover! That's right! Risk free! Lock Of The
Now let's go to the oracle, God's gift -- John

BRANDON'S face fills the monitor. Completely off-
guard.

BRANDON

... Wow. What an offer. The phones'll be flooded.

WALTER

We're that sure! John, rundown the pitfalls facing the
average
bettor. I mean a game this huge, all the added
dynamics, without
your expertise most bettors might as well just... flip
a coin,
am I right?

BRANDON

(tapping into it)
That's right, Walter! Last game of the year ladies and
gentlemen!
Come Sunday you're either ending the season a winner
or a loser!
It's crunch time! The last action on the way out the
door!

Anthony, And I am absolutely, 1000-percent sure that I, John
will end the season ahead of the game!

EXT. TV PRODUCTION STUDIO - NIGHT

The studio doors open. WALTER exits. BRANDON right
beside.

BRANDON

You can't guarantee they'll win! It's insane!

WALTER

I can You think? Well I say if you can flip a coin to pick,
guarantee the game!

BRANDON

What if you lose?

WALTER

Fuck it, I'm ruined anyway.

BRANDON

At least cap it out!

WALTER

(turning to him)

Can't you feel it, Brandon?

BRANDON

I don't know what you're talking about.

WALTER

world I think you do. The best part of the best drug in the
isn't the high.

dice The best part is the time just before you take it! The
are dancing on the
greatest high table. Between now when they stop -- that's the
in the world!

INT. SALES OFFICE - DAY

phones fast
Superbowl pre-game
last minute

Mayhem. Loud and crowded. They can't answer the
enough. A big screen TV is set up in front. The
show is seen coming to an end. SALESMEN machine-gun
calls. Scribble like mad.

Southie

Win, we get a piece! Lose, we cover! It ain't rocket
science!

Take New York minus two and the over! 42 points!
It's an iron-clad
lock! How much you betting with your book?

HERBIE

business, we're

Our reputation's the guarantee! 28 years in the
not going anywhere! Bet this game big!

(yelling toward the windows)

Can we please get some air in here!

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - DAY

feeding
Hangs up

BRANDON, suit and tie, looks through the glass at the
frenzy. He closes the blinds. Goes to the closet.
his jacket. Removes his tie and --

INT. SALES OFFICE - NIGHT

gather

Kick-off is seconds away. WALTER and the SALES STAFF
around the set, turn up the sound.

1ST TV ANNOUNCER

New York wins the toss and elects to receive.

2ND ANNOUNCER

Some bettor somewhere just made some money.

WALTER

now -- That's it! No more calls! Kill the phones! Kill 'em
right now!

line up The ringing stops. All eyes on game as the two teams
SALESMEN. for kick-off. WALTER before the tv. Laughing with

INT. BRANDON'S OFFICE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

TONI alone. View across the hall into the office.
BRANDON enters, wearing his UNLV jacket and faded jeans.

TONI

(to BRANDON, re: WALTER)

rites. Look at him. Dead man walking, should be getting last

having Hours away from losing everything, but Walter -- he's
the time of his life.

BRANDON

Maybe he thinks he already did lose everything.

the SALESROOM WALL OF TVS, the ball's kicked and the game begins --
-- a explodes in cheers after a good play -- PLAYERS collide
atop desks fumble bounces across the field -- SALESMEN clamber
interception, a for a better view -- WALTER in agony after an
the score moment later elated when a flag brings the play back --
-- board FILLS FRAME, New York trails 14/7 at the half and

suddenly PULL BACK TO SHOW -- the tension level in the room is
a fighter suspended. We're in the eye of the storm. WALTER like
between rounds. BRANDON appears.

WALTER

this I'll

Hold onto that coin you flipped. Game keeps up like
have to borrow it.

BRANDON

It's not over yet, Walter. I wouldn't change my bet.

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Superbowl's on
watch.
Mercedes

BRANDON packs things into a duffel bag. The
tv.
The sound's off. Play's resumed. BRANDON removes the
Sets it on a nightstand beside an envelope and the
keys. Picks up a plane ticket and --

EXT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

the same
Flags
when a
beat.
and --

BRANDON comes down the steps, carrying his bag, dressed
as the day he came. BRANDON starts down the sidewalk.
a cab. It stops. He opens the door, about to get in
cheer from the SALES ROOM makes him look up and --
POV BRANDON -- TONI looks down from a window. Frozen
She turns away. BRANDON climbs in the cab, drives off

INT. SALES OFFICE - NIGHT

York's driving.
set, climbing
suddenly scores
it, looks

Fourth quarter. Superbowl blaring from the tv. New
Minutes left. The SALES STAFF are screaming at the
over each other to get a better view and New York
and the room erupts and WALTER'S right in the middle of
around --

WALTER

Where the hell's Brandon?

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door's ajar. WALTER rushes in.

WALTER

touchdown
You're missing the game! We're back in it! A New York
and we win both bets!

pauses
Walter walks back to the bedroom. The tv's on. WALTER
Rolex
to watch another play, about to leave when he spies the
the letter.
on the nightstand, envelope beside it. WALTER picks up
TONI appears
Sees his name on the outside. He opens it, reads.
in the BG. WALTER turns.

WALTER

... He left.

TONI

I know.

WALTER

And you didn't you tell me?

TONI

He asked me not to.

WALTER

Just like that? No goodbye?

TONI

I'm sure it's in the letter.

WALTER

I'm sure it is... I wonder what's not in here?

TONI

What do you mean?

WALTER

Brandon you
What do you mean, what do I mean? When it comes to
seem to have all the answers.

TONI

He had enough. He wanted his life back.

WALTER

He said that to you?

TONI

Yeah, loud and clear, by leaving.

WALTER

I think it's something else.

TONI

Yeah, tell me.

WALTER

You know.

TONI

No.

head. A

ON -- the TV. New York's driving. Game reaching a
clock in the corner counts down the final two minutes.

WALTER

You have no idea, huh?

TONI

You're missing the game.

WALTER

No I'm not. This is the game.

INT. JFK AIRLINE TERMINAL - NIGHT

BRANDON travels down an escalator and --

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TONI at the door. WALTER approaches.

WALTER

homesick.
feelings

Something was bothering him. I mean sure, maybe he was
Or I was thinking maybe he had such, you know, deep

I just for me he couldn't face saying goodbye. What a minute.

blue. What thought of something. Just came to me. Out of the
because -- about this? Maybe Brandon left without telling me

(full volume, in her face)

You let him fuck you!

Nailed at ON -- TV. A New York RECEIVER catches a long bomb.
and -- the 20. Clock down to a minute 30. No time to huddle

WALTER
Do you deny it?

TONI
Do I have to?

WALTER
I know you did!

TONI
Really? Another "lock of the year?"

night! This **WALTER**
I saw you, Toni! I saw you go into his room that
room! With him! I never went to Vegas!

INT. JFK AIRLINE TERMINAL - NIGHT

flights and-- BRANDON walks through FRAME. PASSENGERS rush for

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TONI and WALTER in the middle of it --

TONI

You mean you lied to me about the trip!

WALTER

Don't talk to me about lying!

TONI

I guess you had the whole thing planned?

WALTER

Don't make this about me!

TONI

Put me out there on a tray!

WALTER

Yeah, I put the tray out there -- but you didn't have
to shove
an apple in your mouth and jump on it! On him!
left --
ON -- New York throws a pass. Blocked. 45 seconds

WALTER

Admit it!

TONI

You played me!

WALTER

You're damn right I did!

TONI

... Brandon was right. Son of a bitch!

WALTER

You don't deny it!

TONI

Best pick he ever made.

WALTER

What the hell are you talking about?

INT. JFK AIRPORT BAR - NIGHT

Final seconds.
around the
PASSENGERS watch the Superbowl on a tv over the bar.
BRANDON appears. Stands outside. CROWD of people

set, it looks like the last play and --

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TONI before WALTER. Inches away --

TONI

You were gambling with me that night, Walter. Brandon
knew it.
somehow.
I didn't
but I figured
believe him -- I mean after all we've been through --
what the hell.

Toni con'd

He slipped out the back,

TONI CON'D

didn't even stay here. And you... you were in such a
good mood
Otherwise
why wouldn't you confront us? Confront me?

CLOSE ON -- TV. Last play. No time left. The New
York QUARTERBACK
drops back, about to be sacked, starts to run --

INT. SALESROOM - NIGHT

The room's at fever pitch, everyone screaming at the TV
and --

INT. BRANDON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

WALTER still as a statue. Game in the BG. TONI
rolling --

TONI

that
Looking at
set us
Only we

you more
with
Understand?
we have,
all that's

down his

And now I find out you've been thinking ever since then
we did sleep together? Living with it like that?
me like that? You sick fuck! You wanted to lose! You
up! Like I was something you just toss on the table!
booked your bet, Walter!

Brandon and me. The two of us, who evidently love
than you love yourself. Your fantasy's to end up alone
nothing! Well I won't let that happen to you!
I will never let that happen! This is it! We're all
Walter! All we're ever gonna have! You and me, we're
real!

WALTER stands there, staring at her. Tears streaming
face and --

INT. JFK AIRPORT BAR - NIGHT

as the
LINEMEN.
block clears
- a fumble
signaling
won, but

Answering --

CAMERA on the tv. Blaring the game. Bar going crazy
New York QUARTERBACK runs for the end zone. Juking
Dodging tackles. Nearing the goal. A last-second
a lane and the QUARTERBACK barrels by, dives -- a hit -
on the goal line -- a beat -- a replay -- a REFEREE
a touchdown -- and the game's over -- and New York has
more importantly they've covered the spread and --
BRANDON walks down the corridor, his cell rings.

BRANDON

It's me.

BRANDON'S DAD

Hello, Brandon?

BRANDON

Hey, hey the big winner. What's going on?

BRANDON'S DAD

Nothing much... the usual.

BRANDON

friend turned
C'mon, I know it's rough, it's supposed to be. A
me on to the place. She said it's the best.

BRANDON'S DAD

Where are you headed?

BRANDON

choose from.
I don't know, but I got an airport full of planes to

BRANDON'S DAD

Does your mom know I'm in rehab?

BRANDON

Yeah, I told her.

BRANDON'S DAD

don't bet
Great pick on New York. It's like I always said, you
quarterbacks and receivers--

BRANDON

(finishing his words)

exactly what
--You bet the offensive line. I remember. That's
I was thinking about, pop.

BRANDON'S DAD

(excitement creeping in)

opening drive
downs --
tv...
No kidding! Wow. Helluva game, huh? Boy, that
was a beaut, the way they drove like that, six first
you shoulda seen me, Brandon -- I'm screaming at the

sound
down

BRANDON smiles as he listens to his DAD talk. The loud
of a jet taking off fills the terminal as BRANDON walks
the corridor and --

DISSOLVE TO

ext. Elementary school playground - day

able to move
coach's

A dozen 9-year-old PEE-WEE FOOTBALL PLAYERS, barely
in over-sized gear, are lined for practice. BRANDON,
whistle, faces them.

BRANDON

schedule.
important I
yourselves.
proud of

We're up against a tough team today, toughest on our

But you're ready for it. You're prepared. Most
want you to go out there and have some fun. Enjoy

Keep it loose. Because you can't make me any more
you than I already am. Team cheer, bring it in --

The KIDS gather close, thrust their hands in the center

--

Thunderbirds!

BRANDON

Go get 'em!

suited and
TEAMMATES

The KIDS scramble across the field, other TEAM seen
ready. PARENTS on the sideline. One of BRANDON'S tiny
hangs back, approaches BRANDON.

TEAMMATE

You really think we can win today, Coach?

BRANDON

... I'd bet on it.

game --

BRANDON drapes an arm over the KID, walks him to the

CAMERA lifting higher --

And higher --

And that's it.

FADE OUT
THE END